COPS GO UNDERCOVER TO AID SENIORS, PG 2

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VANCOUVER • WEEKEND, DECEMBER 19-21, 2008 metro

Celebrity Buzz

Depp goes shopping for ring

pg 42

Taylor is resigning to head council

JEFF HODSON
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Carole Taylor is stepping aside as MLA for Vancouver-Langara to head a federal economic advisory council, B.C.'s former finance minister said Thursday.

Carole Taylor

The council, which was announced by federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, includes business leaders from across the country and will provide input to the Jan. 27 federal budget.

"I really felt that it was important that if I was serving on a council giving advice to the new federal minister on issues that were for all of Canada that I should step aside," said Taylor in a phone interview yesterday.

"I had already announced that I wouldn't have to run again, so I think most people thought I had already left.

"I hope that I made a difference."
Carole Taylor

Officially, now I will leave."

She said her departure is close enough to the May 2009 provincial election that there will not be a by-election for her seat.

Taylor, who served as finance minister for three years (2005-08), introduced North America's first carbon tax.

She said her biggest accomplishment was signing 90 per cent of all public-sector workers to contracts before their old ones expired.

"I felt privileged to have (served as MLA) … at the end of the day, I'm a person who is leaving provincial politics feeling very good about the opportunities I had. I hope that I made a difference."

ShareYourViews
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Warning to check ski towers

SAFETY An informal North America-wide warning has been issued for ski hill operators to check their towers for water seepage after the collapse at Blackcomb Mountain on Tuesday.

Similar to what happens when a water-filled bottle is left in the freezer, the tower at Blackcomb burst when water that accumulated inside it froze.

According to Warren Sparks, executive vice-president and general manager of Doppelmayr, the company that manufactured the lift, operators can check for water by simply tapping on the towers and listening. If the towers are full, they need to drill a hole to drain the water out, Sparks told CBC News Online.

A formal warning will be issued next week after the company's investigation is complete.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Please recycle

He's playing for the good guys now

Mats Sundin

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Santa Claus, it turns out, is a big fan of the Vancouver Canucks.

And in that spirit of giving, Thursday he plopped a big Swedish present into a pair of hockey socks that had dangled hopefully from Vancouver's collective mantle since July.

Mats Sundin is the newest member of the Vancouver Canucks, general manager Mike Gillis announced Thursday afternoon. The 37-year-old free agent centre was signed to a one-year, pro-rated $10-million deal, according to media reports.

"I am truly excited to be joining the Canucks," Sundin said in a statement. "Once I made the decision to return to play a few weeks ago, the Vancouver opportunity was simply the best overall fit."

Sundin, who is at his home in Sweden for Christmas, will be in Vancouver on Dec. 27. There is no timeline for him to enter the lineup, Gillis said, and he will be treated like any other player returning from injury or absence.

Mike Brown, who currently wears No. 13 was "thrilled" that Sundin was joining the team, Gillis said. Brown will wear No. 15 and Sundin will wear his familiar No. 13.

Sundin, ranked 30th all-time in points (1,321) with 555 goals and 766 assists, became a free agent on July 1.

That same day, Gillis offered the 6-foot-5, 230-pound centre a contract of $20 million over two years. The deal would have made Sundin the highest paid player in the league.

A number of suitors, including the Montreal Canadiens and New York Rangers, were also seeking Sundin.

Gillis, who met with Sundin on Oct. 30, said he was encouraged by the level of interest the Swede showed in the Canucks.

"I had a real good feeling that his interest was there and if he decided to play, we had a real opportunity to get him."

Gillis said the team still has about $2.5 million under the salary cap this year for possible dealings.

MORE COVERAGE PG 16

Free Daily News Group Inc., operating as Metro Vancouver Newspapers 1190 Homer Street, Suite 250, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 2X6. Publisher: Maryse Lalonde

New police complaint commissioner recommended
Stan Lowe was recommended to the Legislative Assembly as the new police complaint commissioner. Lowe, who's currently the communications counsel for the Criminal Justice Branch, is expected to start his new position in February. METRO VANCOUVER

Local

New shelter open

A new 27-bed shelter opened in the Downtown Eastside on Thursday night, two days after the province, City of Vancouver and Streetohome Foundation announced funds for 200 more shelter beds this winter. The New Fountain Shelter opened at 9 p.m. METRO VANCOUVER

News in brief

SOUGHT Police in Toronto are asking for Vancouver's help in locating a man wanted Canada-wide for sexual assault. Edward Melvin Ellis, also known as James Ellis and Edward Tapper, 48, fled Toronto in 1999. He's believed to be in B.C. and may be working as a truck driver.

Edward Melvin Ellis

CHARGES The Crown has approved two drunk driving-related charges against the former Polish consul to Canada in Vancouver after he allegedly rear-ended a fire engine while drunk. Tomasz Lis was let go shortly after the accident. He appears in court on Jan. 13, 2009.

CRASH Six Langley youth were lucky not to have been seriously hurt after being hit by a drunk driver while walking down the road, RCMP said Thursday. The 54-year-old driver was found to have blood alcohol content twice the legal limit and arrested.

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Movies Showtimes, trailers reviews and purchase tickets at **metronews.ca/movies**

Video Vancouver police go undercover as seniors to catch violent thieves at **metronews.ca/canada**

Analysis Politics 2008: From one 'dysfunctional' parliament to another at **metronews.ca/canada**

Operation keeps seniors safe

Cops' undercover mission has halved thefts on elderly in the DTES

KRISTEN THOMPSON
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VIDEO Police go undercover as seniors to catch violent thieves in the DTES at metronews.ca/canada

An undercover operation to dress Vancouver cops as seniors to catch robbers in the Downtown Eastside has cut theft from the elderly by more than half.

The officers were used as bait for would-be thieves, and it only took 20 minutes for an officer dressed as a disabled man in a wheelchair to be robbed.

Operation Oldtimer was launched after Const. Christiane Prevost noticed a trend of elderly assaults in the DTES, Insp. Adam Palmer said.

Prevost found 80 per cent of street robberies in Vancouver happened in the DTES, and many more weren't being reported.

Two officers, one in his 60s and another in his 40s, who wore stage makeup to appear elderly, posed as senior citizens five times from August to October.

> **"It's an attack on their dignity."**
> Insp. Adam Palmer

"While any violent crime is concerning, it's particularly disturbing when you see people being victimized because they are vulnerable," said Palmer.

"It's an attack on their dignity, self-confidence and sense of security."

Police arrested 10 people, one of whom already had 10 robbery convictions, and reduced the prevalence of robbery of seniors by 59 per cent compared to the same time last year.

Sgt. Toby Hinton, the younger of the undercover officers, said he felt vulnerable as a senior: "You really appreciate what elderly and disabled people go through in the DTES."

IMAGES COURTESY OF THE VPD

A surveillance camera captures a man being assaulted and robbed in the Downtown Eastside.

Vancouver Police Sgt. Toby Hinton gets transformed into an elderly man as part of an undercover operation to catch thieves targeting seniors.

B.C. drunk driving convicts to use breathalyzer each time they drive

JEFF HODSON
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Beginning in February, people convicted of drinking and driving in B.C. will have prove they're sober each time they get behind the wheel by using dash-mounted breathalyzers.

The ignition interlock system, introduced as a trial in 2005, has been installed in 300 vehicles in B.C.

"We believe this is a good move to improve public safety on our highways," said Solicitor General John van Dongen.

JEFF HODSON/METRO VANCOUVER

Ian Marples, general counsel for Alcohol Countermeasures Systems, demonstrates the ignition interlock system.

"It is another form of accountability for people who have demonstrated that they are prone to drinking and driving."

The new program will be mandatory for anyone convicted of impaired driving after Feb. 1 or anyone who receives two 90-day driving prohibition or three 24-hour roadside suspensions. It could impact 4,000 drivers annually.

The program is not retroactive. The Superintendent of Motor Vehicles, however, still has the power to force repeat drunk drivers to take part.

Keep gifts in trunk, cops warn

THEFT With the biggest shopping weekend of the year coming up, Vancouver police are warning shoppers to keep gifts out of view in their cars and keep their vehicles locked.

> **"(It's) prime shopping-spree time for thieves."**
> Colin Brown

Colin Brown, CFO of Canadian Direct Insurance, said the last weekend before Christmas is "prime shopping-spree time for thieves."

He said they follow people to their cars, waiting for shoppers to put bags inside and head out for more shopping.

Brown advised shoppers to keep their cars in well-lit, high-traffic areas.

Const. Jeff Campbell, with the Granville Street Neighbourhood Policy Office, added that it takes no time for thieves to jimmy the lock of a car door or break the glass.

He said if you leave items in your vehicle, keep them in your trunk.

KRISTEN THOMPSON/
METRO VANCOUVER

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Fire victims to receive donated gifts

A single mom and her son whose home was destroyed in a recent fire will be presented with donated gifts at the Burnaby RCMP detachment Friday. The family lost all their possessions in a recent blaze. METRO VANCOUVER

Vet's licence in question after horses seized

POLICE A Langley veterinarian who had six of her emaciated horses seized by the B.C. SPCA could have her licence revoked.

Police are considering charging Carol Schoyen and her husband, Mark Marohn, also a vet, with animal cruelty after a horse was used to drag a car out of a ditch. The RCMP seized another five horses on their property. Two of the animals had to be put down.

"The British Columbia Medical Veterinary Association (BCVMA) has initiated an inquiry hearing under the Veterinarians Act against Carol Schoyen," said organization registrar Valerie Osborne.

The BCVMA can't order an inquiry against Marohn as his registration was suspended two years ago when he didn't pay his annual dues, she said, adding part of the mandate for the licensing body for B.C. vets is to ensure they meet standards of care and conduct.

The couple were evicted from their property on Monday. KRISTEN THOMPSON/ METRO VANCOUVER

Keep pooches warm: SPCA

Short walks recommended

The B.C. SPCA is recommending that owners of small dogs shorten their walks while the temperature remains below zero.

Spokesperson Lorie Chortyk said small, short-haired dogs are especially susceptible to the cold.

"It's better to just take them out to do what they need to do and not be out for more than 10 to 15 minutes," she said.

Nancy Howatson, owner of Barking Babies in Yaletown, agreed.

"They're going to get sick guaranteed, 100 per cent. They don't have a lot of body fat on them."

Wearing doggie jackets helps keep small dogs warm, Howatson said, adding that larger dogs also benefit from being bundled up.

"Not only will it keep a big dog warm and dry, but it will also save you the time of having to dry them off and shaking their wetness everywhere. When they come in the house, they're dry."

The temperature is expected to stay below zero all weekend.

METRO VANCOUVER

Road salt

- Road salt can accumulate on dogs' paws and contribute to irritation or health issues if licked.
- Pet owners should use a warm moist cloth to wipe off salt.

JEFF HODSON/METRO VANCOUVER

Natasha Beckow, marketing manager of Barking Babies, a boutique pet store, holds Tallulah, a Yorkie, in Yaletown.

Albion Ferry running partial service as ice on Fraser River improves

FERRY TRAVEL The Albion Ferry is up and sailing again, providing partial service.

On Tuesday, the ferry link between Maple Ridge and Fort Langley shut down due to ice floes.

With ice conditions on the Fraser River currently improving slightly, one vessel will be in operation.

Officials were to decide on Friday whether to add the second.

The ferry will be running slower then usual, and may even close again if continued cold temperatures create thicker ice floes.

ETHAN ROTBERG/ FOR METRO VANCOUVER

Driver fined $2,000 after deadly crash

COURT The driver of a packed van that crashed on Highway 1 in Abbotsford, killing three female farm workers, pleaded guilty Thursday to driving without reasonable consideration and driving without a proper licence.

Harwinderpal Kaur Gill must pay $2,000 and can't drive for one year.

Investigators of the 2007 accident found there were more people in the van than there were seats and seatbelts. METRO VANCOUVER

News in brief

ESCAPE Mission RCMP are asking for help in locating an escaped inmate serving 13 years at Ferndale Institution for kidnapping and extortion. Police were notified Thursday that Chi Wai Chan, 34, had escaped sometime before 5 a.m.

ARRESTS Three men believed to have been working together in a string of bank robberies in the Lower Mainland have been arrested, RCMP said yesterday. Adam James Hindle, 36, William Ryan Tickle, 24, and a third man whose identity has not been released were charged. METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Four people die in Saskatchewan fire

Four people died and three were injured in a fire in Nipawin, Sask., on Wednesday night. A six-year-old boy and his twin sister died. A woman, 21, and a man whose age is unknown also perished. A woman, 30, was rescued from the blaze and airlifted to a hospital in Saskatoon. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**

Canada

Legal battle brewing

The president of AbitibiBowater says the Montreal-based newsprint giant will fight to protect its interests in central Newfoundland, following the provincial government's decision to expropriate timber and hydro resources. Premier Danny Williams, left, said Bill 75, which was passed quickly this week in the house of assembly, was a necessary move to safeguard the province's natural resources. CBC NEWS ONLINE

Spy agency listening in

CSIS monitored calls between terror suspects and attorneys

Canada's spy service has been listening to telephone conversations between terrorism suspects and their lawyers for the past 18 months as part of a strict monitoring program developed by the government.

A federal court justice stunned lawyers in a Toronto courtroom yesterday when she revealed that the Canadian Security Intelligence Service had monitored conversations between Egyptian refugee Mohamed Zeki Mahjoub and his lawyers since his release on bail in the spring of 2007.

Mahjoub's lawyers demanded that the monitoring immediately stop, calling the practise a breach of the fundamental right of solicitor-client privilege.

"I feel as though my house was broken into," said his Toronto lawyer, Barb Jackman, outside the courtroom. "It's incredibly invasive."

Justice Carolyn Layden-Stevenson summoned a conference call in court late yesterday where CSIS lawyer Jim Mathieson agreed the monitoring would stop and that any conversation inadvertently recorded would be erased.

> **"It's done, it's over, it's unfortunate ... But there's nothing we can do to change the past."** Justice Carolyn Layden-Stevenson

Layden-Stevenson then said she would amend the order for Mahjoub's bail conditions to explicitly prohibit such recordings.

"It's done, it's over, it's unfortunate ... But there's nothing we can do to change the past."

CSIS was listening to the calls on behalf of the Canadian Border Services Agency, which is responsible for enforcing conditions of Mahjoub's release.

Defence co-counsel Marlys Edwardh said she is now concerned with what will become of all the recorded conversations that were provided to the border agency by the spy service.

"How will they segregate and delete that material in some way that we can be satisfied is actually no longer in their possession?" Edwardh asked outside court.

She said she asked government lawyers to work with the border agency on a proposal outlining what they will do with all the recorded conversations over the past 19 months.

"They are available to be seen and used by others, which is completely unacceptable," said Edwardh. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Cold medicines not safe for kids under 6, Health Canada says

WARNING Health officials urged parents Thursday not to give over-the-counter cold medicines to children under the age of six, citing concern over misuse and overdoses.

Health Canada, which had earlier this year recommended the medicines not be given to children less than two years old, said there is limited evidence that the medications have any effectiveness for young children.

Safe?

- Drug companies maintain that nonprescription products are safe when used as directed.

Health Canada asked a scientific panel to review the issue this year, and said that the panel found that in addition to concerns of misuse and overdoses there were reports of rare but serious side effects from the treatments.

Health Canada said manufactures will be required to change their labels on the medicines next year, and studies will continue on proper dosing levels for children. REUTERS

Only first steroid dose helps babies: Report

HEALTH Giving pregnant women at risk of preterm delivery multiple doses of steroids rather than a single injection does not improve a premature babies' survival rates, says a new study.

The paper, written by a team of Toronto researchers and published in the journal Lancet, found mothers who receive multiple courses of antenatal corticosteroids have an increased probability of giving birth to an infant who weighs less, is shorter in length, and has a smaller head circumference. The authors recommend the elimination of this common medical practice. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Quebec **Cabinet strikes gender equality**

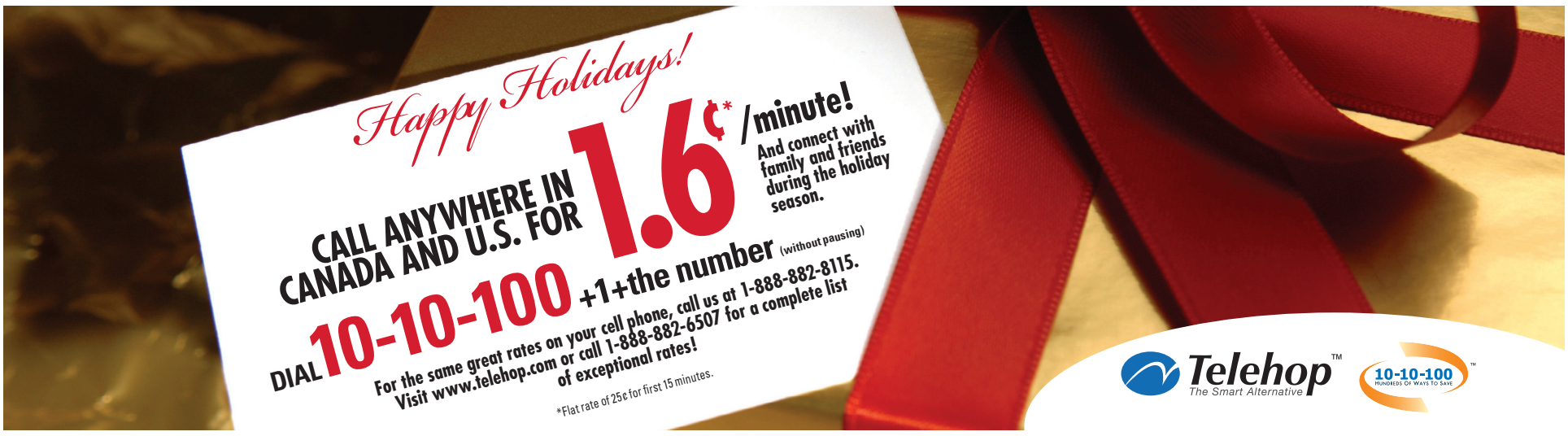
MATHIEU BELANGER/REUTERS

Quebec Premier Jean Charest, centre, stands up after posing with his newly appointed cabinet at the National Assembly in Quebec City on Thursday. Half of the 26 cabinet ministers are women.

News in brief

SACKED A veteran Montreal city worker who was suspended after being spotted with a can of beer last weekend while driving a snowplow has lost his job. The downtown borough council of Ville-Marie voted unanimously Thursday to fire the employee of almost 30 years.

GUILTY PLEA A Quebec man has pled guilty to several charges, including drunk driving, after his car struck a woman who was out in her wheelchair taking her dog for a walk. Roger Walsh, 56, appeared in a Valleyfield courtroom Thursday to plead guilty to charges of hit-and-run and impaired driving. The accident occurred in October in the quiet, rural community of Les Cèdres, west of Montreal. Anee Khudaverdian was celebrating her 47th birthday. The dog survived. CBC NEWS ONLINE



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Afghan-Canadian appointed as Kandahar governor

Tooryalai Wesa, 58, of British Columbia, accepted Afghan President Hamid Karzai's offer for the top political posting in the troubled province where Canada's troops are deployed. He'll be sworn in on Saturday. Wesa, his wife and three children and have lived in Coquitlam, B.C., for 13 years. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**

Maple Leaf settles for $25M

Meat company ends class-action suit with victims of listeriosis outbreak

When lawyers began filing class-action lawsuits against Maple Leaf Foods in August claiming thousands of people had suffered from eating listeria-tainted cold cuts, company president Michael McCain fired back.

In internal e-mail memos to staff, McCain dismissed class-action lawyers and painted some of the self-professed victims as opportunists making the "faintest, thinnest of claims of so-called emotional stress or illness (tummy ache stuff)."

That tone changed yesterday when Maple Leaf settled the class-action lawsuit with victims of the listeria outbreak, committing to pay between $25 million and $27 million in compensation. Under the agreement, victims of listeria-induced stomach aches stand to receive potentially thousands of dollars from the company.

"Our goal throughout this legal process has been to negotiate a fair and early settlement so that we can obtain court approvals and promptly compensate families who were affected," McCain said in a statement issued Thursday. "This was a tragic experience and I want to acknowledge the co-operation of all the parties involved to ensure that people affected receive timely restitution."

The settlement still requires court approval in Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan. The Ontario approval hearing is to be heard early next year.

Ted Charney, a Toronto lawyer who represented some claimants, said the settlement came quickly thanks to co-operation on both sides.

STEVE RUSSELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A staff member cleans the slicers at a Maple Leaf plant in Toronto. The company reached a deal with thousands of people involved in a class-action lawsuit Thursday. The settlement is said to be valued between $25 million and $27 million.

"Our goal throughout this legal process has been to negotiate a fair and early settlement." Michael McCain, Maple Leaf president

Members of the lawsuit will receive widely varying compensation depending on the severity of their injuries.

At the low end, illnesses lasting a day or two will be eligible for a $750 payout.

Those who suffered illnesses lasting two weeks to a month will be entitled to $8,000 plus any loss of income and $750 a day for hospitalization.

Payouts of $120,000 will go to the estates of those whose death symptoms were consistent with listeriosis, plus funeral expenses, $35,000 to their spouses, $30,000 for each of their children and $20,000 for their parents.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

CFIA holding back listeria documents

INFORMATION Thousands of pages of documents detailing the federal government's handling of this summer's listeria outbreak are being withheld.

Torstar News Service and the CBC are seeking the records, which include e-mails sent between officials with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Maple Leaf Foods and the City of Toronto through an access to information request.

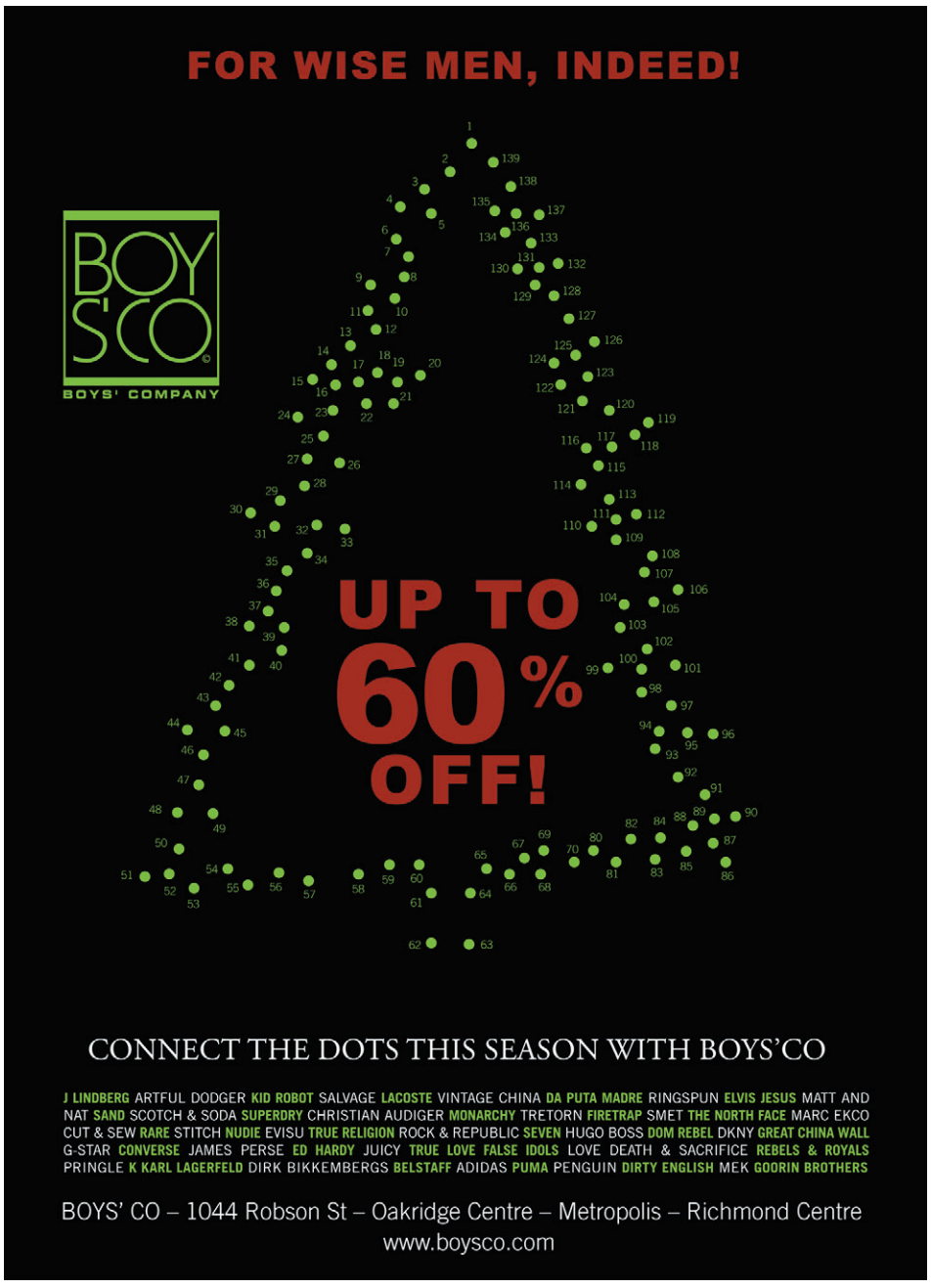
30 days

- While the federal act stipulates a 30-day time limit for responding to information requests, there is no penalty for ministries that fail to meet that deadline.

Citing the sheer volume of documents requested, the department says it is short-staffed and can't produce the information any faster.

None of the records first requested four months ago have been released.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



Flaherty calls on banks to deliver

ECONOMY Banks are failing to live up to their end of the bargain in spite of federal measures to ensure credit availability, according to Finance Minister Jim Flaherty.

"We expect the banks to reciprocate," said Flaherty in Saskatoon yesterday just before pre-budget consultations with business leaders in Saskatchewan.

Flaherty said he will hold meetings with the CEOs of Canada's major banks in early January along with Bank of Canada Governor Mark Carney — and he wants answers.

"I expect them to make it evident to us that they're making credit available in Canada," Flaherty said.

"I expect them to make it evident to us that they're making credit available in Canada." Finance Minister Jim Flaherty

The federal government has announced a slew of measures in recent months to ensure banks continue to lend to both businesses and consumers.

Ottawa tripled the size of its mortgage purchase program to $75 billion in order to free up liquidity on the banks' balance sheets and help them maintain capital ratios. It is also ready to backstop more than $200 billion in interbank lending so banks can boost their lending capacity. But the head of the association for Canada's financial institutions said big banks can't reignite the lending market on their own and said it would take a unified effort to stimulate growth.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

PM planning $30B deficit

ECONOMY Prime Minister Stephen Harper plans a major stimulus package to rescue the economy that will drive the federal budget deficit between $20 billion and $30 billion next year.

The massive spending Harper has in mind includes a bailout package for the struggling Big Three North American automakers, Harper told CTV News in a year-end interview.

Harper, who vowed during the election campaign never to run a budget deficit, now says the extra spending is necessary, in response to the unexpectedly deep recession and demands from Canadians to help them cope with the global economic crisis.

Flaherty

- Finance Minister Jim Flaherty said infrastructure spending next year will exceed $6 billion.

Much of the plan to strengthen and stabilize the economy will be focused on federal spending to help cities build and repair urban infrastructure.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

News in brief

LIBERALS Michael Ignatieff stated yesterday he has no interest in reopening the Constitution in the near future to formally recognize Quebec as its own nation. He also reiterated his grounds for supporting the minority Tories' coming federal budget. Ignatieff, who has said he remains open to the idea of the coalition, reaffirmed the decision of 'wait and see' what the Conservatives will bring to the table with their January 2009 budget. MPs from both parties met this week to discuss the budget and gave rise to the belief among some that the coalition will remain in 2009. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

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SHOPPERS DRUG MART

Ministers reject lifting ban on U.S. poultry

EU farm ministers overwhelmingly rejected a proposal yesterday to lift Europe's 11-year ban on U.S. poultry imports, despite strict conditions designed to ensure consumer safety, A dispute over chlorine-washed chickens has soured the European Union's relations with the United States, its largest trading partner, since the EU embargo was imposed in 1997. REUTERS

World

Breakfast eaters healthier

Breakfast may be the most important meal of the day — as long as that meal is not a doughnut, according to a new study. In a survey of U.S. adults, researchers found that people who ate lower-calorie foods for breakfast tended to have a better diet overall. Men who ate a healthy breakfast generally weighed less. Among women, breakfast eaters — regardless of the food involved — tended to weigh less. REUTERS

Russians fear 'Stalinist' laws

Liberals say new bill could be used to suppress dissidents

Russian liberals have appealed to President Dmitry Medvedev to veto a set of new laws they say could lead to purges reminiscent of the Stalin era.

The government has submitted to parliament, which is dominated by the pro-Kremlin United Russia party, a bill that broadens the interpretation of treason and espionage to include the vague definition of "acts against the constitutional order".

Opponents say this could open the door to arbitrary trials against dissenters at home, whereas the narrower definition was used exclusively to describe cooperation with foreign intelligence services.

In another move that has scared Russian liberals, parliament adopted a law on Friday under which a single judge rather than a jury will decide in trials of treason, espionage, terrorism, hostage-taking, mutinies, sabotage and civil unrest.

"Thanks to these amendments anyone who has drunk coffee with a secretary of a foreign embassy can be nabbed."
Dmitry Oreshkin, independent political analyst

"Jury trials, as a rare element of civil society's control over courts, have been blatantly stolen to favour secret services," leading liberals and intellectuals said in a letter published in the independent Novaya Gazeta paper.

"Dozens of innocent people could be jailed or evicted," they said in the letter.

Russian human rights campaigners accuse former President Vladimir Putin of backtracking on democratic reforms and turning Russia into a police state — a charge Putin himself has repeatedly denied.

"Thanks to these amendments anyone who has drunk coffee with a secretary of a foreign embassy can be nabbed, just like me for talking to you," independent political analyst Dmitry Oreshkin told Reuters.

By adopting tougher laws the Kremlin could be seeking to keep a tight lid on dissent, fearing fierce outbursts of social anger as the global crisis bites in Russia, Oreshkin added.

Authors of the bill scrapping jurors say the institute of juries, reinstated now after being abolished by the Bolsheviks, is not mature enough to handle trials, which could have grave political consequences.

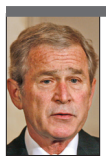
The Russian rights body For Human Rights said in its letter posted on its site www.zaprava.ru that the new legislative measures threw justice back to the legal norms of Joseph Stalin's Soviet Union.

REUTERS

Outgoing Bush gives Obama tips on handling Russia

ADVICE Preparing to leave office, President George W. Bush Thursday advised his successor to try to stay friends with Russia despite disagreements.

"There's common interest and there's going to be a lot of tensions," Bush said at the conservative American Enterprise Institute think tank.



"There's common interest and there's going to be a lot of tensions."
George W. Bush

"The president has got to be in a position where he can deal with those tensions in a way that doesn't send chilling signals with other allies."

While not mentioning President-elect Barack Obama directly, Bush has spent his final weeks emphasizing efforts he says his successor should continue. Obama will be sworn in on Jan. 20.

Bush famously said after meeting then-President Vladimir Putin in 2001 that he trusted the Russian leader after gaining a "sense of his soul."

Putin, who is now prime minister but still thought to effectively run the country, later clashed with Bush on several issues and took steps U.S. officials saw as counter to democratic reforms.

Washington and Moscow have sparred over the Iraq war, a U.S. missile defense system for Europe and Russia's war with Georgia in August.

They coordinated efforts to offer Iran civil nuclear energy while trying to prevent Tehran from developing atomic weapons, but Russia has blocked U.S. efforts to ratchet up United Nations sanctions against Iran. REUTERS

India can hold suspects 180 days now

LAW The Indian government rushed a new law through parliament on Thursday that will allow police to hold suspects for up to 180 days, a move legal officials said is an attempt to allay public anger over the Mumbai attacks.

But the Congress Party-led government, facing an election by May, could also be courting trouble by making the bill similar to an old law which it had repealed earlier.

The law was proposed amid barely contained public anger over last month's attacks in Mumbai which killed at least 179 people. REUTERS

Paris **Demanding release of political prisoners**

BENOIT TESSIER/REUTERS

Singer Jane Birkin speaks as, left to right, Tina Kieffer, chief editor of French women's magazine Marie-Claire, and French-Algerian director Yamina Benguigui listen at a protest yesterday in Paris demanding the freedom of pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners.

Hamas decides not to renew ceasefire pact with Israelis

MIDEAST Hamas declared an end to a six-month-old Egyptian-brokered ceasefire with Israel on Thursday in the Gaza Strip, raising the prospect of an escalation in cross-border fighting.

"The calm is over," Hamas official Ayman Taha said in an announcement after concluding talks with Palestinian factions in the coastal enclave controlled by the Islamist group.

He said the ceasefire, which Hamas says was scheduled to expire on Dec. 19, would not be renewed "because the enemy did not abide by its obligations" to ease a crippling blockade of the Gaza Strip and halt all attacks.

Hamas stopped short of threatening an immediate escalation against Israel, which had hoped to extend the truce and appears wary of a confrontation that could cause heavy casualties on both sides. REUTERS

Rwandan 'devil' given a life sentence

GENOCIDE Rwandan army colonel Theoneste Bagosora, the architect of the 1994 slaughter of more than 500,000 people and the "devil" that a Canadian general tried in vain to stop, was convicted of genocide Thursday and sentenced to life in prison by a United Nations tribunal.

Bagosora was found guilty of using his position as director of Rwanda's Ministry of Defence to direct Hutu soldiers to kill Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

Bagosora is the titular figure of Shake Hands With the Devil, the chilling 2003 account of the Rwandan genocide by Senator Romeo Dallaire, who was in charge of the failed UN peacekeeping mission when the massacres began.

The court said that Bagosora, who had authority over the Rwandan military, was responsible for the deaths of former Rwandan prime minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana and 10 Belgian peacekeepers who tried to protect her as she was killed at the outset of the genocide.

Dallaire was a key prosecution witness in Bagosora's trial. REUTERS

Tribunal

- The Tanzania-based International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda was set up by the UN in 1994 to try those responsible for the killings and had its first conviction in 1997. There have been 42 judgments, of which six have been acquittals. It does not have the power to impose the death sentence.

News in brief

KOREA A top U.S. military commander said Thursday he thinks North Korean leader Kim Jong-il, who U.S. and South Korean officials believe had a stroke earlier this year, is still in control of the country.

GUANTANAMO The Pentagon is working on a proposal to shut the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, that would be available to President-elect Barack Obama once he takes office, a defense official said Thursday.

SENTENCE The founder of Italian dairy group Parmalat was sentenced to 10 years in jail for market-rigging in a trial on Thursday over the company's 2003 collapse, while all other defendants were acquitted, judges said.

REUTERS

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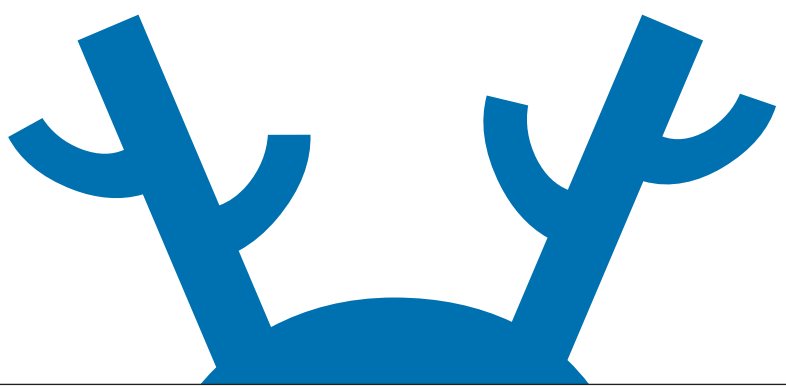

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Comment & Views

Comment

Ripping the suburbs

OmniVision

rick.mcginnis@metronews.ca

Suburbia has been, for three generations at least, the social equivalent of pork rinds or supermarket tabloids — something no one has a good word for, though it continues to exist, even thrive, in spite of blanket condemnation by those who "know better."

Moviegoers are getting a chance to revisit this spacious, tree-lined hell this Christmas with the release of Revolutionary Road, the Oscar favourite that reunites Kate Winslet and Leonardo DiCaprio, and allows director Sam Mendes to take another swing at the same target he savaged almost a decade ago with American Beauty.

Based on Richard Yates' 1961 novel, it's the story of the Wheelers, Frank and April, who have somehow managed to take up residence in that epicentre of middle-class despair — the post-war, northeastern commuter suburb — while presuming themselves much better than the "hopeless emptiness" they see everywhere. Or not — there wouldn't be much of a story if they didn't realize, with a shock, that they've become trapped in that most awful of mid-century nightmares (in mid-century novels, at least): Material comfort and routine.

Yates' book was one of the first to define the conventional wisdom on suburbs, a viewpoint voiced almost entirely by people who don't live there, and echoed vociferously by the young people who claim to have "escaped" them — an image that requires us to equate freeways with barbed-wire fences, and malls with guard towers.

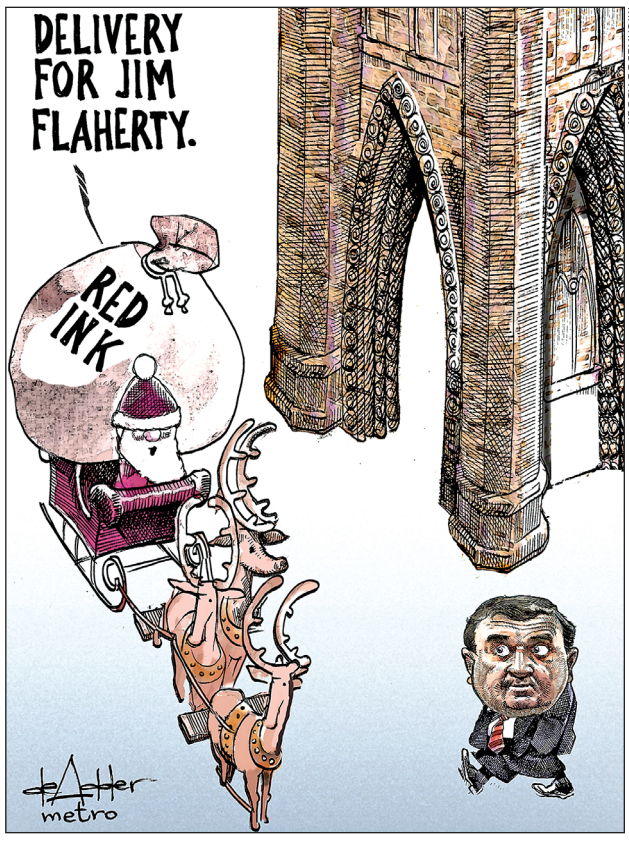
"In the conventional wisdom, the greatest threat posed by suburbs is that they have the temerity to grow, or 'sprawl.'"

In the conventional wisdom, the greatest threat posed by suburbs is that they have the temerity to grow, or "sprawl," in urban studies jargon, which sums up the paradox of the suburban problem: That people actually want to live in these terrible places, no matter how many novels, movies, magazine articles or learned studies condemn them.

It requires that we look at suburbs as places that never change, or that their essence is frozen in the mid-century form described by Yates and others — an eternal Levittown, where the saplings never turn into trees, and no one ever puts a skate ramp in the pool or builds a grow-op in the rec room.

In his zeal to reprise his suburb-bashing, Mendes was probably blind to how his tragedy would actually play. Most people will probably watch Revolutionary Road and envy Frank and April's cute home with its very collectible period furnishings and the woods across the road and wonder if they could move in tomorrow, hopeless emptiness be damned.

Rick McGinnis writes about music, movies, books and television, but not opera.



MICHAEL DE ADDER

Views

A newsmaker for all the wrong reasons

UrbanCompass

Visitors to CBC's B.C. website have picked the mystery of the severed feet that washed up on various beaches as the newsmaker of the year.

OK, that's a pretty good story, if you like a macabre mystery with a CSI twist. And it's almost as much fun as the election of the CEO of Happy Planet as the mayor of Vancouver.

But the story I like, probably for all the wrong reasons, is the story of the Polish consul who last Friday allegedly drove into the back of a fire truck at the intersection of Bute and Robson Street.

Apparently, that didn't slow him down … he just kept on going.

Fire truck No. 7 gave chase ("Follow that Polish consul?") and eventually brought him to a halt. Police arrived and, at that point, the diplomat blew more than three times the legal limit, 260 milligrams of alcohol for 100 millilitres of blood — the legal limit is 80. Do the math.

No charges have been laid, but Mr. Lis has been suspended and is heading back to Poland where he faces an undiplomatic reception. His boss, the foreign minister, says that people who don't know how to behave abroad will be eliminated from the diplomatic corps.

The kicker is that Mr. Lis was apparently driven to drink because he was upset by B.C.'s decision not to charge RCMP officers involved in the death of his compatriot Robert Dziekanski at YVR. So upset he had to get blind stinkin' drunk, get into the government-issue Volvo and plow into the back of a fire truck?

Of course, various wits have noted it's a good thing he was not apprehended by the RCMP, who have been known to Taser distraught Poles.

But this is not a time for inappropriate humour. Instead, we need to bite our lip (hard) and solemnly intone that drinking and driving is bad — at all times and under all circumstances. And there's nothing funny about this story. Nothing. Nada. Not a bit.

Still, it gets my nod as the story of the year because it reminds us that beneath all the thundering and public posturing around the Dziekanski case — and Mr. Lis contributed his fair share to the sound and fury — lie the fundamental rules of human behaviour, one being that we all make big mistakes.

In Mr. Dziekanski's case, it ended tragically. In Mr. Lis' case, it ended tragi-comically.

So, happy holidays and for everyone's sake this season, don't drink and drive. You don't want to become the newsmaker of the year for all the wrong reasons.

Paul Sullivan is a Vancouver-based journalist and owner of Sullivan Media Consulting.

Letters

Automakers aren't the only industry in need of aid

I am extremely saddened to see the amount of attention the automotive-industry bailout is getting in the media.

It is understandable that most people want to keep the many jobs being held down by those in southern Ontario, yet I rarely see the devastating news of layoffs and mill closures in smaller communities like Kenora, Ont., Dryden, Ont., Thunder Bay, Ont., Terrace Bay, Ont., and Fort Frances, Ont., over the past few years

For Dryden, a one-industry town, the continued cutting of staff and the permanent shutdown of its paper machine this year leaves many wondering about the stability of the town.

Many teenagers who leave to attend college and university never come back as there are few jobs to be had in their field.

Perhaps if more was done to create and keep the existing jobs, many wouldn't be forced to leave and go to other parts of the country to earn their living.

VICKI WALCHUK, TORONTO

Elephants need to be protected from zoos

The new study (Dec. 12) showing that elephants die early in captivity has generated the predictable zoo industry denials. Officials in Canada and the U.S. claim the report is flawed and conditions in North American zoos today are different from those surveyed for the study.

The stark, undersized elephant exhibits in Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton or in most any other Canadian or American zoo should be enough to convince anyone that things are just as bad here in North America.

North American zoo elephant populations are declining each year. Infant and adult mortality is high; social groupings are unnatural; health problems, including arthritis and obesity, are rampant; tuberculosis and herpes virus are entrenched; and abnormal behaviours are widespread.

It's clear that elephants don't need to be protected by zoos, they need to be protected from zoos.

ROB LAIDLAW, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ZOOCHECK CANADA

It's your turn to tell others what you think. E-mail your thoughts and opinions to: vancouverletters@metronews.ca
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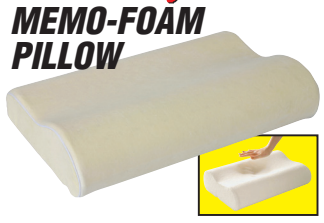

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  NEXT TO UNITED FURNITURE

Chrysler reduces speed on NASCAR sponsorship
Chrysler, which is halting factory operations for a month as sales and cash dwindle, will not abandon its involvement in NASCAR racing, but will reduce spending by about one-third to put expenses in line with its revenue, the company said Thurday. REUTERS

Business

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EDITOR: FERMIN DESOUZA, FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Boxing Day comes early

Retailers try to kickstart sales with blockbuster deals

As the economic news worsens, Canadian retailers are pushing hard to convince consumers they can get their best deals now instead of waiting until after Christmas.

Several national retailers are using "Boxing Day" in their advertising messages to draw attention to their pre-Christmas deals.

Even luxury chains, like Birks, have resorted to "Buy one, get one 50 per cent off," a strategy normally associated with mid-market clothing retailers.

"The thing that's really surprised us is just how fast (the economic downturn) has happened."
Derek Nighbor

"I think it's the deepest discounts that we've seen ever at this time of year," said Wendy Evans, a principal with Evans & Company, a Toronto consulting firm. Retailers "are looking at any opportunities they can to lure consumers into the stores."

"The thing that's really surprised us is just how fast it (the economic downturn) has happened," said Derek Nighbor, vice-president of prescient national affairs for the Retail Council of Canada. "I think the question everyone is waiting on is how bad it's going to get."

A survey conducted for Scotiabank found Canadians planned to spend $790 on average, or 13 per cent less than last year, on gifts, entertainment and travel.

Retailers have resorted to increasingly aggressive tactics to stand out from the pack.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

In brief

CAR PARTS Economic conditions will hammer profits in the auto-parts industry by 58 per cent, or almost $1 billion, according to a Conference Board of Canada report. Profits will plunge 38 per cent this year, to $1.05 billion from $1.69 billion, and fall from there to $700 million in 2009 — the lowest forecast the board has made since the study began in 1999.

WIRELESS After issuing a rare profit warning earlier this month, BlackBerry-maker Research In Motion Ltd. reported a "best-ever start to the holiday buying season" on $396 million US in income, up seven per cent, and forecasting an improved $3.3 billion to $3.5 billion US in revenue.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

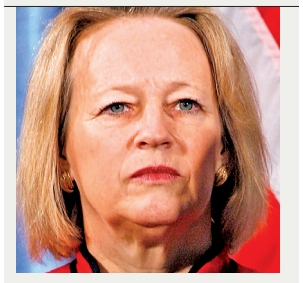
Financial regulations to toughen: Obama

ECONOMY U.S. president-elect Barack Obama promised yesterday to strengthen financial regulatory agencies and crack down on runaway "greed and scheming" in an effort to restore stability to a reeling U.S economic system.

Obama named veteran regulator Mary Schapiro as chairwoman of the Securities and Exchange Commission and Gary Gensler to head the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. The president-elect said he would charge them with leading a broad overhaul of the financial regulatory system.

"These individuals will help put in place new, common-sense rules of the road that will protect investors, consumers and our entire economy from fraud and manipulation by an irresponsible few," Obama told reporters. REUTERS

Schapiro's plan



• Mary Schapiro, who has spent her career regulating financial markets, said investor trust was the lifeblood of the financial markets. Restoring that confidence would be her "top priority," she said.

Germany **Sign of the times**

REUTERS/KAI PFAFFENBACH

A share trader is pictured behind a mock one-dollar U.S. bill and a mock 500-euro note symbolizing a consumer credit note at the German stock exchange in Frankfurt. Corporate sentiment deteriorated for the seventh month running in December, raising pressure on the European Central Bank to cut rates further to counter what could be Germany's deepest post-war recession.

U.S. considers 'orderly' auto bankruptcy

AUTOS The White House said yesterday it is considering the option of an "orderly" bankruptcy as it weighs aid for U.S. automakers and Chrysler prepared to shut down all of its factories for a month.

The move injected a new note of uncertainty into the politically charged discussions of a bailout for the U.S. automakers that is reaching a conclusion after more than a month of wrangling.

U.S. President George W. Bush is weighing the option of a managed bankruptcy in the U.S. auto industry as it works out details of an aid package that is close to being finalized.

There is an "orderly way to do bankruptcies that provides for more of a soft landing," U.S. spokeswoman Dana Perino said.

In a prepackaged or managed bankruptcy, concessions and financing are arranged before a court filing to accelerate and simplify a restructuring.

The news came as Chrysler geared up to shut down all of its 30 factories for a month, starting today. REUTERS

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I'm for the company that offers more vehicles with 7 L/100 km (40 mpg) or better highway fuel economy.

I'm for the company that sold the most small cars of any automaker in Canada (more than Toyota, Honda, Mazda and Nissan in 2007).

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2008 North American Car of the Year
(Hybrid shown)

*Awarded by North American International Auto shows. 1. Chevrolet Tahoe Hybrid named 2008 Green Car of the Year by Green Car Journal editors. **2008 Best New Small Car awarded to Saturn Astra. 2009 Best New Small Car over $18,000 awarded to Pontiac Vibe. †Based on GM Testing in accordance with approved Transport Canada Test methods. Your actual fuel consumption may vary.

Burke hurt by lack of Linden invitation

According to various media reports, Maple Leafs GM Brian Burke was upset he was not invited to Trevor Linden's jersey retirement ceremony Wednesday. Burke was the Canucks' assistant GM when Linden was drafted in 1988, and was GM while Linden played there for several seasons. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports

Whitt, Morneau in for WBC

Ernie Whitt, left, will manage Canada's team at the World Baseball Classic, while Minnesota Twins first baseman Justin Morneau has been named the squad's first player. The March 5 to 23 World Baseball Classic will be played in several cities around the world, including Toronto. Canada opens play March 7 against the U.S. at the Rogers Centre. METRO NEWS SERVICES

SPORTS@METRONEWS.CA

The math on Mats

Mats Sundin, 37, brings an impressive resumé to his new team:
- 555 goals (22nd in NHL history), 1,325 points in 1,305 career games
- Scored 30 goals or more 10 times
- Missed 53 games to injury in 17 seasons
- Nine-time NHL all-star
- Leafs' career leader with 420 goals and 987 points (78 points in 74 games last season)
- Was NHL's longest-serving captain (since 1997 with Leafs)
- Olympic gold with Sweden in 2006
- Three world championships

THE DEAL: One year worth about US$5 million He made $5.5 million last season with Toronto.

THE DEBUT: NHL rosters are frozen until Dec. 27. Agent J.P. Barry says Sundin probably won't be game-ready until January.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Tomorrow

7 p.m.
TV: CBC
Radio: TEAM 1040

Mats Sundin will be the main attraction in Vancouver come the New Year, but the young guns of the Blackhawks are sure to captivate the crowd's attention tomorrow night at GM Place. Patrick Kane, Jonathan Toews and Patrick Sharp lead a sublime squad of skilled skaters that has progressed quicker than most expected. The good news for Canucks' fans is that Chicago plays Calgary tonight.

RED HOT: Daniel Sedin had two goals and an assist Wednesday, and has racked up 19 points in his last 15 games. Vancouver's leading scorer has quietly put himself on pace to tie a career-high of 36 goals.

WHO'S IN FIRST: Both the Hawks and Canucks find themselves in a similar goaltending situation for different reasons. Cristobal Huet was signed as the number one goalie in the off season, but Chicago has had even more success with the overpaid Nikolai Khabibulin. In Vancouver, both Curtis Sanford and Cory Schneider have been equal parts solid and inconsistent. Smart money says Khabibulin and Sanford start.

SALO LIKELY OUT: Don't expect to see the oft-injured Sami Salo tomorrow. A rib injury suffered Wednesday will likely keep him on the shelf.

SCOTT RINTOUL/FOR METRO VANCOUVER

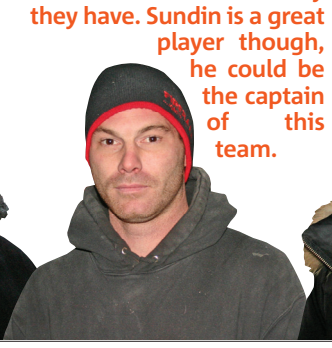
What do you think of the Mats Sundin signing?

Chris Chanakos
Age 40, Vancouver

A: I actually think it's kind of ridiculous. It's just like when they signed Messier. What they really need is a second goalie.

Darryl Jones
Age 34, Vancouver

A: It really depends on what they decide to do with the rest of the money they have. Sundin is a great player though, he could be the captain of this team.



Michelle Parsons
Age 34, Vancouver

A: It's great that he will be joining the team. I think he is still a really good player and should be able to help the Canucks a lot.

Wings deep six the Sharks

NHL ROUNDUP

Pavel Datsyuk collected four points with a pair of goals and Ty Conklin stopped all 24 San Jose shots as the Detroit Red Wings handed the Sharks their first regulation loss since Nov. 9 in convincing fashion, 6-0, at Joe Louis Arena.

The Sharks had a 15-game point streak (12-0-3) snapped and were one game removed from tying the 1929-30 Boston Bruins for most points through the season's first 31 games.

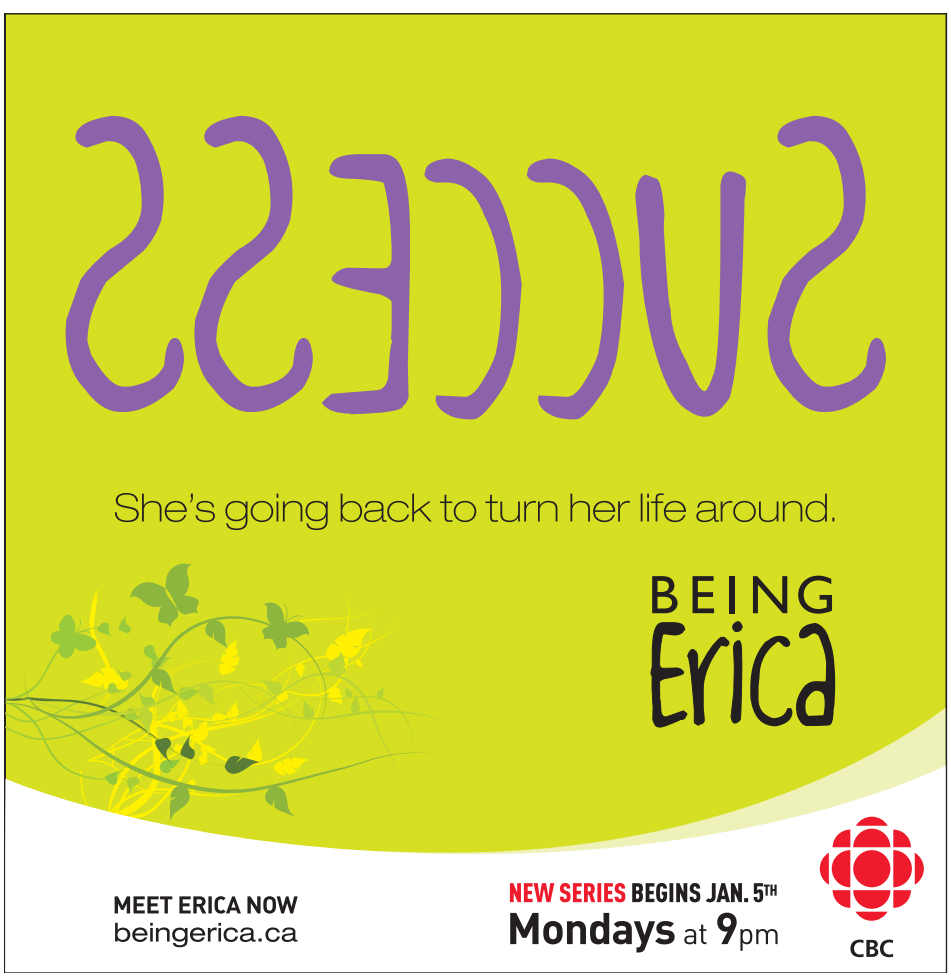
The Flyers' Glen Metropolit collides with Canadiens goalie Jaroslav Halak last night. Montreal won 5-2.

AVALANCHE 2, LIGHTNING 1

Milan Hejduk was awarded the game-winning goal on a controversial call in the shootout, as the Colorado Avalanche edged the Tampa Bay Lightning, 2-1, at the St. Pete Times Forum. Hejduk was the fourth skater in the shootout after the first three were unsuccessful, and veered to the left for a backhander. His shot was stopped by Mike Smith's blocker, but the officials huddled and ruled it a goal.

CANADIENS 5, FLYERS 2

Sergei Kostitsyn, Steve Begin and Guillaume Latendresse each posted a goal and an assist, as the Montreal Canadiens knocked off the Philadelphia Flyers, 5-2 last night. METRO NEWS SERVICES



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2315 West 41st
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PHOTO COURTESY JENNIFER HEIL

Jennifer Heil returned from a season-long hiatus to capture the silver in her return to the World Cup freestyle circuit.

Second place feels pretty good to Heil

Olympic champion Jennifer Heil returned with a bang, capturing a silver medal at the World Cup freestyle skiing circuit Thursday.

She placed second to the U.S.'s Hannah Kearney in the woman's dual moguls. The Spruce Grove, Alta., native had sat out all of last season to recover from a knee injury and improve her technique.

Heil finished fourth in qualifying and posted victories in her quarter-final and semifinal.

The four-time overall World Cup champion and gold medallist at the 2006 Turin Olympics says she lost against Kearney because she lost control.

Fellow Canadian Pierre-Alexandre Rousseau landed a gold medal, defeating teammate Alexandre Bilodeau, who Rousseau says beat him at the Canadian championships last season. Audrey Robichaud of Quebec City was ninth, Stephanie St-Pierre of Victoriaville, Que., 12th, Maxime Dufour-Lapointe of Montreal, 13th, Kristi Richards of Summerland, B.C., 16th and Chloe Dufour-Lapointe of Montreal 21st.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Yankees introduce CC and A.J. to NYC media

The New York Yankees introduced a new pair of aces at the top of the rotation on Thursday in free agents CC Sabathia and A.J. Burnett, who they hope will re-arm them for another run at a championship.

New Yankee additions A.J. Burnett, left, and CC Sabathia meet the New York media yesterday.

Their contracts, worth a combined $243.5 million, made the biggest splash at MLB's recent winter meetings and gave evidence that the new Steinbrenner regime was determined to launch the new Yankee Stadium with a winner.

Sabathia, who signed the richest contract ever for a pitcher at $161 million for seven years, pondered the Yankees' offer for a month, leaving many to believe he would instead join a team on the West Coast where he grew up.

"The whole time I was trying to make a decision for me and my family," the 28-year-old told reporters, admitting "there was some attraction" to staying in California.

Burnett, who agreed to a five-year $82.5 million contract, was 18-10 record last season for the Toronto Blue Jays. He said he was confident he had overcome his injury-plagued past.

"As a young kid growing up in the game, I threw hard and really that's all I did," the fireballing Burnett, 31, said. "I aired it out between starts. I was proud of what I had and showed it off. I didn't take care of myself the way I do now."

Cashman said he listened to Johnny Damon, Alex Rodriguez and Derek Jeter, who all lobbied him to obtain Burnett. "His stuff is electric," the general manager said.

REUTERS

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Mississippi coach arrested
Cincinnati police arrested Mississippi men's basketball coach Andy Kennedy after a cab driver said the coach punched him. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sixteen reasons to celebrate No. 16

Trevor Linden, Captain Canuck, saw his No. 16 sent to the GM Place rafters on Wednesday, a fitting honour for a fine pro. Linden played 19 seasons in the NHL, but he always seemed to fly under the radar, Joe Sakic-style, with his understated ways and soft-spoken demeanour.

So, in tribute, here are 16 reasons to celebrate No. 16:

1. A six-time 30-goal-scorer, Linden maxed out at 33 goals three times, including in 1995-96 when he scored a career-high 80 points. All six 30-goal seasons came in his first eight years in the NHL.

2. Linden scored 12 goals and 25 points in 24 games during Vancouver's run to the 1994 Stanley Cup final. He scored both goals, one shorthanded, in the Canucks' 3-2 loss to the Rangers in Game 7.

3. It was Linden who finally beat Dominik Hasek with 63 seconds remaining to tie the game 1-1 and force overtime in the 1998 Olympic semifinal. Canada couldn't beat Hasek in OT or the shootout, and the Czech Republic went on to win gold.

4. Twenty years after he was drafted second overall (behind Mike Modano) on June 11, 1988, Linden announced his retirement on June 11, 2008.

5. Linden played in only two NHL All-Star Games, back in 1991 and '92.

TheHockeyNews
Sam McCaig
thehockeynews.com

6. Linden scored five hat tricks in the NHL and his career-best night was a six-point game against Edmonton on Dec. 20, 1990.

7. He finished second to Brian Leetch in Calder Trophy voting for best rookie in 1988-89. (However, The Hockey News selected Linden as the top freshman that year, if it's any consolation.)

8. Linden won back-to-back Memorial Cups with his hometown Medicine Hat Tigers in 1986-87 and '87-88. He first joined the Tigers and played a few games as a 15-year-old.

9. He has scored a goal against every team in the NHL — except Vancouver. In nine games against the Canucks, Linden recorded just two assists.

10. Linden took 13 shots, tying a team record, against Colorado on March 9, 1996. And it paid off — he scored a hat trick against the Avs in a span of 4:54, the fastest hat trick in team history.

11. In his swan-song postseason with Vancouver in 2007, Linden tied for the team lead — with fellow veteran Mattias Ohlund — with seven points in 12 games. Overall, he had 95 playoff points as a Canuck to lead the franchise.

12. Linden averaged 0.80 points per game in the playoffs (99 points in 124 games) compared to 0.62 points per game in the regular season (867 points in 1,382 games).

13. Linden is 99th on the NHL's all-time points list and 32nd all-time in games played.

14. Linden liked going home to Alberta. He had 84 points in 102 games against Edmonton, his most points against any NHL team, and 72 points in 103 games against Calgary, his second-most points against any NHL team. He also liked Atlanta; Linden had 11 points in 11 games against the Thrashers, the only team against whom he managed a point per game.

15. Linden's last fight was against Edmonton's Matt Greene during a brouhaha in the dying seconds of a game last Feb. 16.

16. No one has played more games a Canuck than Linden's 1,140.

The Hockey News
thn.com

SCOREBOARD

NHL

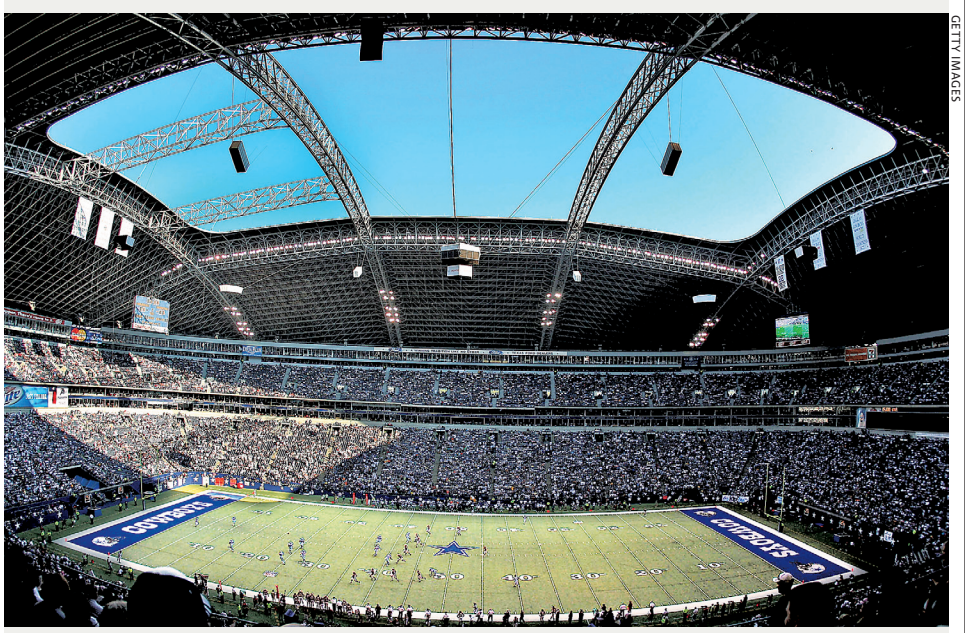
YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
Boston 8 Toronto 5
Montreal 5 Philadelphia 2
Carolina 2 Florida 1 (OT)
Colorado 2 Tampa Bay 1 (SO)
Dallas 6 Columbus 5 (SO)
Detroit 6 San Jose 0
Pittsburgh 6 Atlanta 3
Washington 4 St. Louis 2
Phoenix 2 Nashville 1

TONIGHT'S GAMES
Ottawa at New Jersey
Los Angeles at Buffalo
N.Y. Islanders at Minnesota
Chicago at Calgary
Anaheim at Edmonton

NFL

YESTERDAY'S RESULT
Indianapolis 31, Jacksonville 24

NFL A Texas farewell



GETTY IMAGES

Barring playoff games, the Dallas Cowboys will play their final game at 37-year-old Texas Stadium on Saturday night against the Baltimore Ravens. The unique hole in the roof once led former Cowboys linebacker D.D. Lewis to quip, "Texas Stadium has a hole in the roof so God can watch his favourite team."

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Sails set to shine

Canada Place and the Vancouver Convention Centre present Christmas at Canada Place: On the Sails, which will feature a nightly light show on the sails. Go to christmas.canadaplace.ca for more. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Holiday
Fun Guide

A ballet tradition

Celebrate the holidays with Ballet BC's The Nutcracker (Dec. 28-30 at 7:30 p.m.; Dec. 29-31 at 1:30 p.m.). At the Queen Elizabeth Theatre. Tickets (from $35.75) are available at ticketmaster.ca, 604-280-3311 or at balletbc.com, 604-432-5003, ext. 207.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

SPECIAL FEATURES EDITOR: STEPHANIE BOMBA, STEPHANIE.BOMBA@METRONEWS.CA

Plan a potluck

NOELLE MUNARETTO
for Metro Canada

A New Year's Eve party at home is a great way to ring in 2009 without breaking the bank, celebrity chefs Anna Olson and Trish Magwood say.

Olson, host of Food Network Canada's Sugar and Fresh, says New Year's parties are taking a less formal shape than before.

"I almost get the same sentiment this year as I did in 1999 when it was the Y2K buzz," she says. "In these economically sensitive times, the reaction is sort of the same and entertaining at home is the way to go."

Olson says the best way to enjoy a New Year's gathering is to keep it simple. She recommends getting together with friends beforehand to plan a potluck party.

"Potluck these days is no longer taboo. It can be a fabulous feast," she says.

In addition to the dishes your guests bring, Olson suggests offering foods such as fine cheese, crudités with dip and lots of sweet treats.

Another option that works well for families is to hold an event on New Year's Day.

"New Year's brunch is a great way to entertain without the pressure of alcohol," said Olson. "Yes, you can have your mimosas and sparkling wine, but unlike an evening party, people tend to indulge less."

Magwood, who is the founder of Dish Cooking Studio and hosted Party Dish on Food Network Canada, says that no matter what type of party you host, planning ahead is key.

"The more you leave things last minute, the bigger the premium you're going to pay, because you're going to be less inclined to do stuff yourself," says Magwood.

FOOD NETWORK CANADA PHOTOS

Hosting a potluck reduces party planning stress, chefs Trish Magwood, left, and Anna Olson say.

Stocking up on your specialty ingredients, pantry staples and liquor should be done well before the party to avoid lineups at the stores. Make-ahead dishes that you only have to reheat on party day are a best bet, too.

Magwood, like Olson, believes that a New Year's potluck takes the stress out of party planning. She recommends serving hearty soup with a store-bought bread boule that has been drizzled with olive oil and warmed in the oven. Not only is it economical, but Magwood also says your whole house will smell like freshly baked bread.

"Potluck these days is no longer taboo. It can be a fabulous feast." Anna Olson

The most important advice Magwood offers any party host is to create an event that actually allows them time away from the kitchen.

"If you're going to go to the trouble of hosting a party, you better be able to relax and enjoy it yourself," says Magwood. "Otherwise, you're going to be unhappy going into 2009."

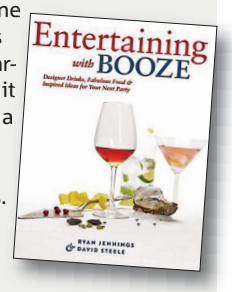
On the web

- Go to metronews.ca to get Anna Olson's recipes for Artichoke Asiago Squares and Sweet Onion Dip with Veggies.

Hosting tips

These tips will have you looking like a pro at your next function:

- **Prepare for the teetotallers.** Some people don't drink booze (can you believe it?!) while others may have to drive home. That doesn't mean you shouldn't make them feel special. Prepare a virgin cocktail or serve them sparkling water in wine glasses and garnish it with a few frozen berries. Pretty, delicious and road-safe.



- **Split the food in half.** Cut wedges of cheese in two, keep a bag of shrimp on reserve and save a box of crackers, for example. This way you can replenish and refresh — it keeps the buffet table looking good and ensures food isn't sitting out for several hours at a time.
- **Rent glassware, dishes and linens.** Party rentals are relatively inexpensive and they show up clean and go away dirty. No dishes and no worries about breakage — worth every penny the next day, and so much more sophisticated than plastic, not to mention environmentally friendlier.
- **Hire help.** Dinner parties for more than 12 and cocktail parties for more than 30 should be catered. Even if you insist on preparing all the food yourself, hire a bartender and one or two servers to staff the ovens, clear the mess and mix the drinks. It's your party and you should be mingling with your guests, not stuck in the kitchen.

Excerpt from Entertaining With Booze: Designer Drinks, Fabulous Food & Inspired Ideas for Your Next Party, by Ryan Jennings and David Steele (paperback, $29.95).

Advice to help guests drink responsibly

BRIAN TOWIE
brian.towie@metronews.ca

The champagne cork pops, the booze flows and chorales of Auld Lang Syne ring out at your party. It's New Year's again, a time for tipsiness.

But understand that if you're hosting an event where guests will consume alcohol, you've got some responsibilities by virtue of the booze being belted back under your roof. While you might not have the same sort of legal responsibility as a bar owner, know that some people at your party may overdo it and make a bad decision — and you might end up paying the price for their mistakes.

If someone at your party is obviously drunk and you continue to provide them alcohol, you can be sued if they injure themselves or others either at the event or on the way home. This includes property under your control at the time of the event — if you rent a hall, for instance.

The odds of this are low due to a precedent set by the Zoe Childs case in 2006, where the Supreme Court found that hosts who provided a venue for an adult BYOB event had no legal responsibility when a guest left intoxicated and caused a crash. Not so low, however, if the drinking involves underage teens — where courts will deal with you more severely if you buy or provide booze for a minor. But you do have a moral obligation to take care of your guests, notes Wanda Kristensen, director of programs at MADD Canada.

"If your guest is clearly intoxicated and planning to drive home, you've got a lot of choices. Chances are if you know them, you can expect who those people will be," she said. "You can take their keys and call a taxi, they can stay over and sober up, or you can have a designated driver."

Easier said than done if you're dealing with a nasty drunk. If someone gets belligerent with you, and nothing works, you can call 9-1-1 and let police know there's an impaired driver on the road. "They catch more people like this than R.I.D.E. programs do," notes Kristensen.

If you're hosting an event where guests will drink, you have some responsibilities.

Visit metronews.ca/movies to get showtimes, watch trailers and read reviews.

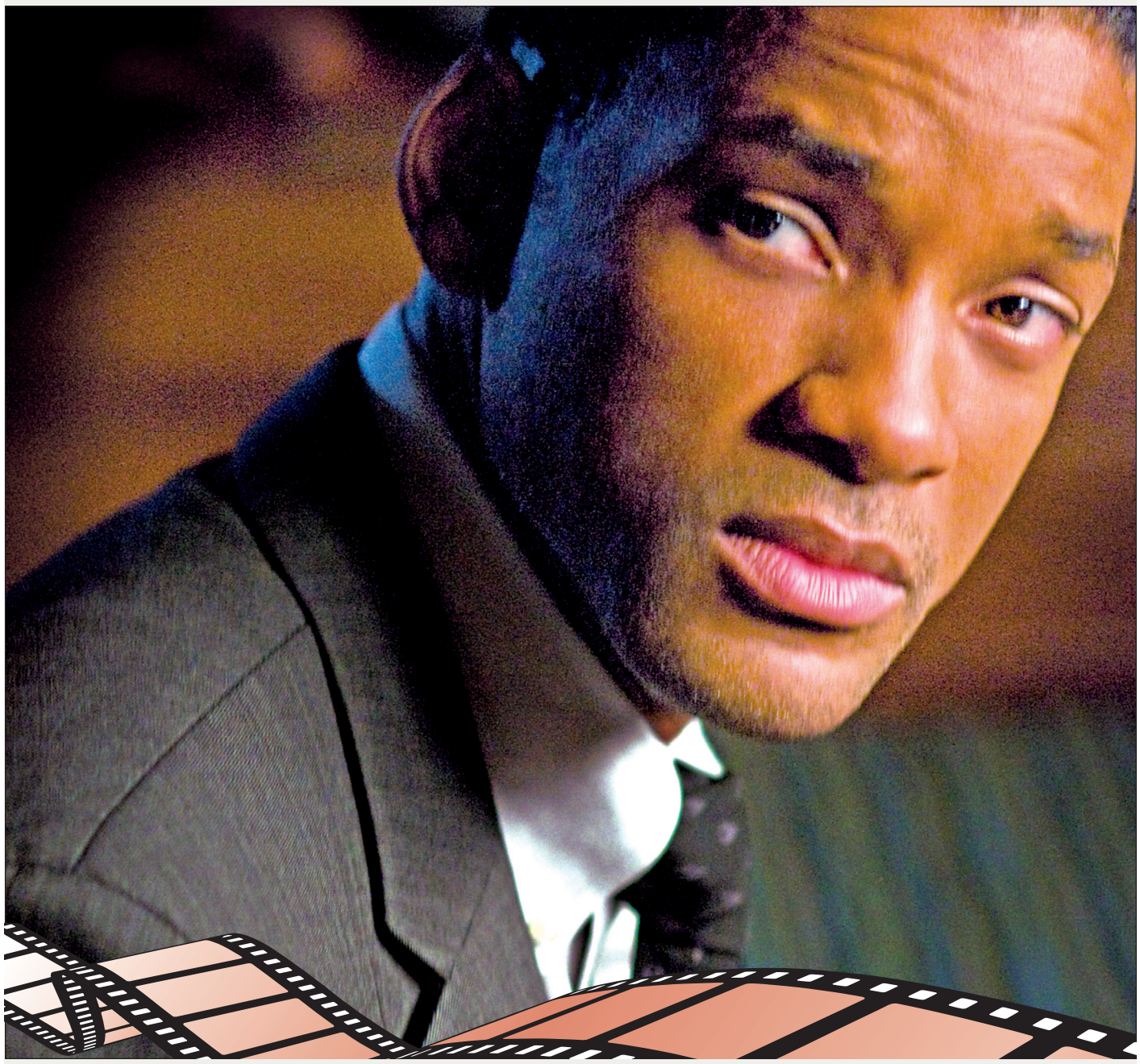
Movies&Entertainment

EDITOR: TINA COSTANZA, TINA.COSTANZA@METRONEWS.CA

Movies

A new man

Pg 22



Will Smith's character is armed with sunken eyes and a haunted posture — these are the hallmarks of the traumatized man he plays in the new drama Seven Pounds. Smith's committed to giving us a 180-degree turn from his usual charming go-getters.

movie

Pg 23

Yes Man shows Carrey back at humble, funny roots.

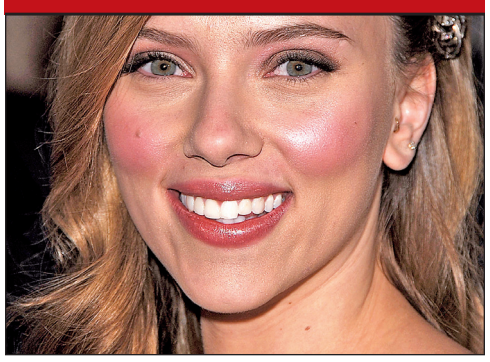
music

Pg 30

Allan Cross delivers his gift: Part 2 of the holiday playlist.

7th heaven

Pg 40



Scarlett Johansson makes our hot list for this week.

Cruise would consider another vampire role

Interview With A Vampire star Tom Cruise has told T magazine editor Lynn Hirshberg he wasn't surprised by the success of Twilight, and that he'd "like to make another" vampire movie. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Movies

●●●●● A CLASSIC; ●●●● EXCELLENT; ●●● GOOD; ●● FAIR; ● POOR

Will Smith stars in the drama Seven Pounds.

Seven Pounds weighs on viewers

Seven **Pounds**

Director: Gabriele Muccino
Stars: Will Smith, Rosario Dawson
Classification: 14A
Rating: ●●

ROBERT ABELE
for Metro Canada

It's an unusual sight, Will Smith looking uncomfortable in his own skin, armed with sunken eyes and a haunted posture.

These are the hallmarks of the traumatized character he plays in the new drama Seven Pounds — and as committed as the box office star is to giving us a 180-degree turn from his usual charming go-getters, the movie around him is something of an overly manipulative, good-for-you slog.

Smith stars as Ben Thomas, a man in full-on suffering from the emotional after-effects of a traumatic incident, the details of which the movie keeps hidden till the end, but aren't hard to ascertain.

Spurred to seek redemption, he takes it upon himself to intrude upon and help the lives of seven carefully chosen people, including a hospitalized boy, a blind call centre worker (Woody Harrelson), and a beautiful cardiac patient (Rosario Dawson).

Rather than lay all their cards on the table as to what Ben is up to, screenwriter Grant Nieporte and director Gabriele Muccino traffic in ersatz suspense, keeping the nature of Ben's sacrificial charity mission secret so that the love story carries maximum tearjerk power when it reaches its twist ending.

And unfortunately, the big reveal is no surprise, and even comes off as faintly ludicrous and bizarre.

Smith and Dawson are fine actors, but they're trapped in a movie in which they're more pawns than people.

Doubt leads SAG nominations

AWARDS Film drama Doubt led all nominees for Screen Actors Guild awards yesterday with five nominations overall, including for best ensemble cast, even as talk of a possible strike cast a cloud over the awards.

Joining Doubt, about a Catholic priest and nun engaged in a battle of wits over charges of sexual abuse, in the race for best ensemble cast were Milk, about slain gay rights leader Harvey Milk, and The Curious Case of Benjamin Button, which tells of a man who ages backward. Those movies each earned three SAG award nods.

Slumdog Millionaire, a tale of romance and money set in India, and Frost/Nixon, which recounts the interviews of disgraced former U.S. President Richard Nixon by British TV host David Frost, also saw their actors land in the race for best ensemble cast and pulled down two nominations apiece.

The Screen Actors Guild represents some 120,000 film and television actors, and winning a SAG award at the group's Jan. 25 ceremony can give actors momentum heading toward February's Oscars, the world's top film honours which are given out by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

But overshadowing this year's race for awards is talk of a possible strike by SAG actors against the major studios.

Current contract talks between the two groups have stalled, and SAG leaders, including President Alan Rosenberg, have called for a vote to authorize a possible work stoppage in the hope that such an authorization would

Viola Davis is nominated for her role in Doubt.

continued >>

Ford to appear in comedy
Harrison Ford is taking a break from fighting bad guys and saving the world to try his hand in a comedic role. The 66-year-old actor has signed onto the film Morning Glory, the Hollywood Reporter says. **MSN.COM**

Movies

●●●●● A CLASSIC; ●●●● EXCELLENT; ●●● GOOD; ●● FAIR; ● POOR

Can't say no to Carrey's charming turn in formulaic Yes Man

Yes Man
Director: Peyton Reed
Stars: Jim Carrey, Zooey Deschanel
Classification: PG
Rating: ●●●

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada

REVIEW Jim Carrey has a fatal flaw — his fans aren't sure what to expect from him anymore. After years of exploring slapstick in laughers like Ace Ventura, Carrey has meandered into melodramatic muck like The Majestic and The Number 23 in an effort to be taken seriously.

With Yes Man, it seems Carrey may be heeding his film's own counsel and just enjoying the ride come what may.

It's definitely an approach that works for him — if not entirely for the movie.

Based on a true memoir, Carrey plays a pessimistic bank loan officer who avoids friends to spend evenings alone and basically wallow in his misery.

After being convinced by a self-help guru to "make a covenant" and say yes to everything, he suddenly finds a world of opportunity — for better or worse.

Jim Carrey

For Carrey the character, that means taking up an online mail-order bride, attending a Harry Potter-themed party, plowing back Red Bulls all night and falling for a free-spirited musician (Zooey Deschanel).

For Carrey the actor, it means getting to re-explore both his famed physical stuntwork — like slipping on a drink (which actually earned him three broken ribs) and the more subtle side that charmed audiences in films like The Truman Show.

Sometimes it works, sometimes not, but the truth is, this comedy has a lot of heart and in spite of its formulaic conclusion, Yes Man is undeniably the most honest effort we've seen from Carrey in a while.

Perhaps this Yes Man has a few tricks up his sleeve yet.

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<< ...continued

restart negotiations.

In recent days, leading actors, including Russell Crowe and Robert Redford, have become the latest big-name celebrities urging SAG members to vote "no" on the authorization. Voting begins Jan. 2.

While talk of a strike overshadowed SAG nominations, the awards remained the focus of many Hollywood watchers.

The SAG race for best actor in a movie will see Brad Pitt, who plays Benjamin Button, competing against Frank Langella for his portrayal of Richard Nixon and Sean Penn as Harvey Milk.

Joining them are Mickey Rourke, who is enjoying a comeback as a faded sports star in The Wrestler, and Richard Jenkins in the immigration drama The Visitor.

The best leading actress race has Meryl Streep, who plays the nun in Doubt, up against Kate Winslet as a frustrated housewife in Revolutionary Road and Angelina Jolie as a mother fighting to find her lost son in Changeling.

Along with those three in the best actress race are Anne Hathaway in Rachel Getting Married and Melissa Leo for the independent film Frozen River.

Nominees for supporting actor in a film included Philip Seymour Hoffman as the priest in Doubt, the late Heath Ledger for The Dark Knight and Dev Patel in Slumdog Millionaire. They were joined by Josh Brolin in Milk and Robert Downey Jr. in Tropic Thunder.

Rounding out the nominees for best supporting actress were Amy Adams and Viola Davis in Doubt, Penelope Cruz for Vicky Cristina Barcelona, Winslet for The Reader and Taraji P. Henson in Benjamin Button.

REUTERS

... and the nominees are

- Actor: Richard Jenkins, The Visitor; Frank Langella, Frost/Nixon; Sean Penn, Milk; Brad Pitt, The Curious Case of Benjamin Button; Mickey Rourke, The Wrestler.
- Actress: Anne Hathaway, Rachel Getting Married; Angelina Jolie, Changeling; Melissa Leo, Frozen River; Meryl Streep, Doubt; Kate Winslet, Revolutionary Road.
- Supporting actor: Josh Brolin, Milk; Robert Downey Jr., Tropic Thunder; Philip Seymour Hoffman, Doubt; Heath Ledger, The Dark Knight; Dev Patel, Slumdog Millionaire.
- Supporting actress: Amy Adams, Doubt; Penelope Cruz, Vicky Cristina Barcelona; Viola Davis, Doubt; Taraji P. Henson, The Curious Case of Benjamin Button; Kate Winslet, The Reader.
- Cast: Doubt, Frost/Nixon, Milk, Slumdog Millionaire, The Curious Case of Benjamin Button.
- Stunt ensemble: The Dark Knight, Hellboy II: The Golden Army, Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull, ron Man, Wanted.

Cronenberg appointed to Canadian Film Centre's board

The Canadian Film Centre appointed David Cronenberg to its board of directors this week. Cronenberg's directing credits include A History of Violence and Eastern Promises. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Movies

●●●●● A CLASSIC; ●●●● EXCELLENT; ●●● GOOD; ●● FAIR; ● POOR

Writer pleased Valkyrie found its wings

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada

Tom Cruise stars in Valkyrie.

FEATURE Christopher McQuarrie is as shocked as anyone that Valkyrie found its wings. In fact, the award-winning filmmaker — mostly regarded for writing The Usual Suspects — never even expected his latest movie to get off the ground.

"Scripts like this, I write them and put them in a drawer," admitted McQuarrie — who also co-produced Valkyrie — during a recent phone interview.

The true story of an inside assassination plot against Adolf Hitler in 1944, Valkyrie is definitely the sort of film Hollywood generally shuns like the plague. So what inspired the scribe to script a story he assumed wasn't sellable?

"The thing that really amazed me was that the assassination itself was not the end of the story," said McQuarrie. "Once you've killed Hitler, you've only just started and now what you have to do is take over his government."

It's just that complexity behind the plot that intrigued McQuarrie. "The challenge of history is not how it ends, it's how to give that ending meaning ... what these men did and the sacrifices they made ultimately brings this movie to what I feel is a really satisfying conclusion."

Lucky for McQuarrie, his Usual Suspects director Bryan Singer (who also helmed X-Men and Superman Returns) shared that sentiment.

After all, it was Singer that became the driving force in getting the subversive script out of the drawer and in front of financiers. With such a hitmaker as Singer behind it, Valkyrie "went from a script that nobody wanted to read to a script that no one needed to read."

Throw in Tom Cruise — who plays Stauffenberg, the fascinating mind behind the assassination plot — and there was no looking back for McQuarrie and Valkyrie.

"I knew, having met with Tom, that he was going to look at the script and see it for what it was, not for what he was going to turn it into," admitted McQuarrie, adding that he was impressed by Cruise's fearless dedication throughout.

"No matter how big the movie got, he never did anything to attempt to change its soul."

Valkyrie opens Christmas Day across Canada.

Classic story gets new tail

The Tale of **Despereaux**

Director: Sam Fell and Robert Stevenhagen
Stars: Matthew Broderick, Emma Watson
Classification: G
Rating: ●●●

PHIL BROWN
for Metro Canada

The Tale Of Despereaux is a classically told fairy tale that relishes the conventions and limitations of its genre.

The story feels almost old fashioned in the earnestness of it's style and message, but in a weird way that's what elevates it over the ever-growing pile of CGI children's films clogging theaters. This is hardly the most original movie of its kind, but it is oddly refreshing to see a movie like this told without a shred of irony.

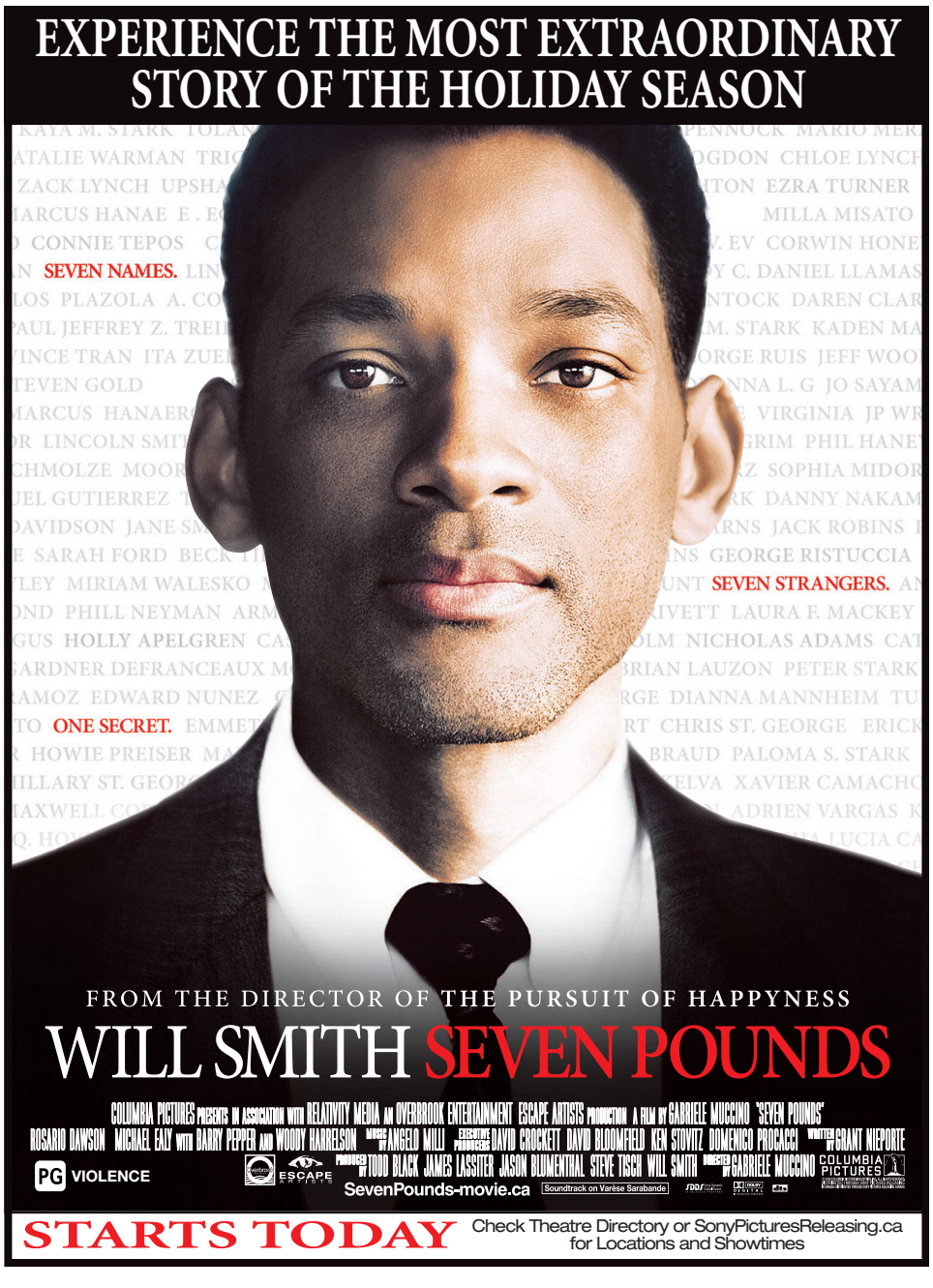
Matthew Broderick lends his instantly recognizable voice to the titular character of Despereaux, a mouse with massive ears and an inflated sense of courage who dreams of adventure and heroism.

While the rest of the mice who live hidden in a medieval castle lead an insular life in fear of humans, Despereaux ventures out of his community to save a dying kingdom. Like I said, pretty standard stuff, but the screenplay by Gary Ross is so tightly constructed and filled with gentle humor that the intended audience won't notice. It's undoubtedly Ross' contribution that made this potentially clichéd story work. Ross has made a career out of writing gentle fantasies like Big, Sea biscuit, and Pleasantville that make traditional storytelling, plots, and messages feel alive and new. His script is brought to life admirably by the directing team of Sam Fell and Robert Stevenhagen, who use their many years of experience in animation to create a technical marvel that doesn't quite match the triumphs of Pixar, but comes damn close.

Matthew Broderick provides the the voice of Despereaux.

As is expected, the voice cast is filled with recognizable actors, but rather than simply casting stars the film uses talented actors like Dustin Hoffman, Emma Watson and William H. Macy to play characters who are actually suited to their talents.

Make no mistake, this is a very simple movie offering simple pleasures. But in a time when most children's entertainment is struggling to seem cynical, edgy, and hip, The Tale Of Despereaux offers an unexpected breath of fresh air.



Ray to direct and write Conjure Wife
Billy Ray, the writer-director of the under-rated Breach and Shattered Glass, has signed on to write and direct Conjure Wife, an adaptation of Fritz Leiber Jr.'s 1943 horror fantasy novel. IMDB.COM

Movies

A CLASSIC; EXCELLENT; GOOD; FAIR; POOR

Winslet explores post-war guilt in The Reader

PHIL BROWN
for Metro Canada

Movie **feature**

Based on a simple plot description, The Reader sounds like a conventional piece of Hollywood's end-of-the-year awards mongering. After all, it is a tragic love story told over the backdrop of the holocaust.

However, dismissing the movie on this level would do it a disservice. Much like the award-winning Bernhard Schlink novel that it's based on, the film is actually a morally complex story about the challenges that the young people of post-Second World War Germany faced when accepting the atrocities carried out by the previous generation.

The Reader might start as an Autumn/May romance between Kate Winslet and a young boy, but things change pretty drastically when the boy discovers that Winslet's character was once a guard at a concentration camp.

Dealing with the Holocaust and Germany's post-war guilt without needlessly moralizing or sentimentalizing the subject is no easy task, but director Stephen Daldry (The Hours) jumped at the opportunity.

"It was always something that I've wanted to do," says the director. "I hope audiences have as many different reactions as possible. I think it is a complex story and there is a great ambiguity to the book. One of the things we tried very hard to do was to maintain that ambiguity."

Daldry's approach to the material is certainly admirable, but his film never would have worked without a talented actress to take on the lead role of the illiterate, Nazi, cradle-robber Hannah Smitz. Kate Winslet was a fan of the book and the first choice for the role, but she almost missed out because of a scheduling conflict.

"The novel first came to my attention seven years ago," says Winslet. "I was absolutely gripped, compelled, and ultimately devastated by the novel. I knew that I wanted to do it, but logistics got in the way. The shooting of Revolutionary Road conflicted and we couldn't work it out.

Kate Winslet stars in The Reader.

"Then it became Nichole Kidman's role until she became unavailable because of her pregnancy, the schedule was shifted and the role opened up for me again. I just felt so lucky that happened."

However, despite how much she clearly enjoyed playing the role, even Winslet refuses to forgive the atrocities of her own character.

"My job as the actress is to understand the character and ultimately love them. And I did love Hannah, because I understood her profoundly. Did I sympathize with her? Yes, but that doesn't mean that I sympathize with SS guards in general, not at all. I don't forgive her.

"But that's what I love about the film. It's not a film about forgiveness or reconciliation. It's a story about regret, because you don't choose who you fall in love with."

The Reader opens Christmas Day.

A Taraji-fest with Brad Pitt

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada

FEATURE When Taraji Henson found out she was going to be co-starring alongside Brad Pitt in their new drama The Curious Case of Benjamin Button, you'd think the young actress would've brushed up on her famous co-star's filmography. Instead, it was Pitt who celebrated what he called "Taraji-fest".

"He made it a point to watch all of my films," said Henson during a recent interview. "He was so impressed with what I was doing with my character Queenie that he wanted to see other stuff that I had done and he watched all of my films and had nothing but good things to say."

Best recognized for her turn in 2005's Hustle & Flow, critics have also had nothing but good things to say about Henson — especially since portraying the adopted mother of Benjamin Button (Pitt), a man who is born in his 80s and mysteriously ages backwards.

"Age is such a big deal. Everybody is afraid of it but it's inevitable," admits Henson. "I think you hold on to youth by embracing what's going to happen."

That's the name of the game in Benjamin Button (it opens Christmas Day) but this highly-anticipated film isn't without another life-affirming message — namely that "our lives are defined by opportunities, even the ones we miss."

"You either catch that opportunity or you miss it and you regret it later or you're happy that you didn't," claims Henson of the film's central theme. "Life is full of circumstances and you just never know."

For Henson, one of those circumstances found her sitting four hours in the makeup chair to seemingly advance her age late in the film. "I personally chose to sit for the whole four hours and let them finish," laughed Henson. "Brad Pitt however had to take breaks which I can understand."

Meryl Streep and Philip Seymour Hoffman star in Doubt.

No Doubt about it — stunning

Doubt
Director: John Patrick Shanley
Stars: Meryl Streep, Philip Seymour Hoffman
Classification: PG
Rating:

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada

Meryl Streep could read the phone book on camera and make it compelling drama. So drop the legendary thespian in a Pulitzer Prize winning play adaptation and you're almost guaranteed stunning cinema.

Such is the case with Doubt, a slow-paced but excellent tale about a private Catholic school under a dark shadow of wrongdoing in 1964.

Streep plays Sister Beauvier, the kind of strict principal who outlaws ballpoint pens, cough drops and dismisses Frosty the Snowman as a pagan song. After all, "He does come to life."

With one eye on her charges and the other on lenient new pastor, Father Flynn (Philip Seymour Hoffman), she warns her staff to be diligent.

When an impressionable teacher (Amy Adams) notices odd behavior between Flynn and the school's first African-American pupil, Beauvier sets out to eject the priest regardless of evidence.

Adapted from his own play, filmmaker John Patrick Shanley succeeds at creating one of the year's most intimate, character-driven dramas ripe with tension and subtext.

Rich with a moral complexity that provides a great amount of gravitas, it's the film's small, but stellar cast that circumnavigates this masterpiece.

As mentioned, Streep is stunning and should nab her 15th Oscar nomination but one cannot overlook Shanley's solid screenplay. So much for having to sit through the phone book.

Delgo tanks at box office

Delgo took home a big prize last weekend. The animated movie voiced by Freddie Prinze Jr., Jennifer Love Hewitt, and Val Kilmer had the poorest opening weekend ever. The movie only made $511,920 US, according to Box Office Mojo. **EONLINE.COM**

Reel Time

●●●●● A CLASSIC; ●●●● EXCELLENT; ●●● GOOD; ●● FAIR; ● POOR

Where there's a Will

InFocus
Richard Crouse
mrchaos33@hotmail.com

Will Smith is the world's biggest movie star: Nobody can touch him. Cruise jumped the couch, Clooney's movies don't make any money and Hanks appears to be in semi-retirement. Only Johnny Depp comes close and he is a distant second.

Last year Big Willie took home $80 million and became the first actor to have eight consecutive movies break the $100 million mark at the box office, but despite all that success a couple of key qualifiers have eluded his grasp.

His home is probably beautiful, but no movie star abode is complete without an Oscar or Golden Globe on the mantle. Cruise has three Globes, Clooney an Oscar and Tom Hanks could start a petting zoo with all his Academy Awards.

Smith has none but it's not for lack of trying.

He's best known for playing cops and agents but in his first big screen role, Six Degrees of Separation, he played a gay con man who claims to be the son of Sidney Poitier.

The movie earned an Oscar nod for co-star Stockard Channing but nothing for Will's risky performance.

He says that movie taught him to be totally committed to his roles, adding that he now regrets taking Denzel Washington's advice not to kiss a man on-screen.

"It was very immature on my part," he says. "I was thinking, 'What are my friends in Philly going to think about this?' This was a valuable lesson for me. Either you do it or you don't."

In subsequent films, the ones that made him a star, he developed the tools that came to define his on-screen persona; the cocky tilt of the head and hipster charm. Those tricks won over audiences but don't win awards.

Then along came a pair of films that put him on the serious-actor-grid, The Legend of Bagger Vance and Ali.

Bagger Vance earned poor reviews and even worse box office, but the Michael Mann film about the legendary fighter gave Smith his first Oscar bait lead role. He pulled a DeNiro, gaining 35 lbs to match Ali's 220 — and surprised critics.

Roger Ebert wrote that Smith "actually (does) a good job of acting" as though it was a shock the Bad Boys star could do something other than grin on cue. Still no Oscar though: A nomination, but no gold.

GETTY IMAGES PHOTO

Will Smith has won acclaim, but he still hasn't earned an Oscar.

For the next few years he seemed content to rule the box office, but two collaborations with Italian director Gabriele Muccino — The Pursuit of Happyness and Seven Pounds, in theatres today — have brought him closer to the award's circle.

"Gabriele Mucchino," Smith says, "is able to help me create characters that are much different from what I would do on my own."

Pundits called their first collaboration Pursuit of an Oscar Nomination and you can almost sense him groping for the award in Seven Pounds, but I fear he doesn't stand a chance this year against Sean Penn, Mickey Rourke and Frank Langella.

He may just have to settle for world domination and leave the awards for the poor folks.

Movies

Movie **morsels**

Australia

REVIEW Australia is a beautifully filmed study of a vast land that — as one character says — has "a strange power." What director Baz Luhrmann should fret over is the drawn-out narrative that plays to melodramatic excess. Set during the outbreak of the Second World War, Australia features Nicole Kidman as Lady Ashley, widow of a mysteriously murdered cattle ranch owner. When confronted by her husband's rival with a takeover bid, Ashley hires a maverick stockman (Hugh Jackman) and joins him on a massive cattle drive across the outback.
Steve Gow/Metro Canada

Beverly Hills Chihuahua

REVIEW These days, it seems Hollywood producers are all wondering the same thing: If my dog could speak, what would it say? Well, Beverly Hills Chihuahua is the latest talking animal flick to heed that query. Featuring the voices of Drew Barrymore, Andy Garcia and other celebs, Chihuahua is a harmless "tail" about a snooty, rich lapdog that gets lost in Mexico and must journey back to Rodeo Drive.
Steve Gow/Metro Canada

Changeling

REVIEW Directed by legendary icon Clint Eastwood, Changeling tells the emotional journey of Christine Collins (Angelina Jolie), a single mother in 1920s Los Angeles who comes home to find her son missing. Following weeks of relentlessly searching, the police suddenly show up with her child, reporters in tow. Great. Only there's a catch: It ain't him.
Steve Gow/Metro Canada

Four Christmases

REVIEW Vince Vaughn and Reese Witherspoon star as a professional couple who always avoid their families during the holidays. After the film's worst plot contrivance traps them in the country and broadcasts their availability to their kin, the couple embark on their dreaded four Christmases. Sure, this is no future Christmas classic, but it will be a movie that you won't angrily turn off when it starts airing on television during the holidays.
Phil Brown/Metro Canada

Frost/Nixon

REVIEW It certainly isn't a given that the play Frost/Nixon would make a great movie. After all, not only is it about Richard Nixon — one of America's least popular presidents — but it's based on a series of simple TV interviews from the 1970s. Not exactly the stuff of cinematic awe. When director Ron Howard (A Beautiful Mind) decided to tackle this adaptation however, he was brilliant enough to cast the same acclaimed duo that carried the play on Broadway. As such, the film features some of the year's greatest performances.
Steve Gow/Metro Canada

Frost/Nixon is currently playing in Vancouver.

Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa

REVIEW If it ain't broke, don't fix it. Yes, it's an archaic, overused adage, but when it comes to Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa, it also applies. The movie isn't without its improvements: It has plenty of jokes and inside-gags for the adults but they're mostly just recycled sensibilities from the 2005 film. Of course, the story is what really counts, and Madagascar 2 tells too many tales.
Steve Gow/Metro Canada

Quantum of Solace

REVIEW The movie starts literally minutes after its predecessor, Casino Royale, ended, with a pre-credit car chase that sums up director Marc Forster's brisk approach to the story. Action scenes are the meat of Bond movies. Most of what we see in Quantum of Solace is at least as good as the standards set in previous films; relentless, and more than a bit improbable. Daniel Craig's James Bond is still an excellent incarnation of the character.
Rick McGinnis/Metro Canada

Role Models

REVIEW Without its leading men — one uses the term loosely in this case — Role Models would be just another installment in the sub-Apatow genre, which is to say a comedy based on character and dialogue and the odd kick in the nuts. Paul Rudd and Seann William Scott are simply the best parts of a great cast that delivers a barrage of laughs.
Rick McGinnis/Metro Canada

Saving Luna

REVIEW Despite the emergence of documentaries as a viable box-office force, nature docs have remained firmly on the cinematic sidelines. Saving Luna, an official selection at over a dozen film festivals, makes the case that such films might have a place in the mainstream and almost succeeds, albeit, in spite of itself. The film chronicles the plight of a lone Orca whale that appeared in the waters off the West Coast of Vancouver Island in 2001. Luna's territorial like nature (very un-whale like) and constant need for attention endeared him to the nearby residents in Gold River.
Ian Gormely/Metro Canada

The Day the Earth Stood Still

REVIEW Robert Wise's now-classic movie The Day The Earth Stood Still carried a timely anti-nuclear message, attempting to stretch the reigning fears of the time; the Cold War was setting in and the Korean War was just around the corner. Almost 60 years later, in Scott Derrickson's remake, the global situation has changed, this time with an ecological message, the latest point of inspiration for screenwriters being global warming.
Talia Soghomonian/Metro Canada

Transporter 3

REVIEW The latest entry in the lucrative but critically maligned franchise, simply called Transporter 3, and once more pits an iron jawed, black belt-sporting mercenary driver Frank Martin against a cabal of greasy, well tailored international baddies. And while the film boasts the same clunky narrative problems and distractingly dubbed European actors as the first two installments, I'm happy to report that the breathlessly-paced Transporter makes amends by delivering some of the most delirious action set pieces of this or any other year.
Chris Alexander/Metro Canada

Twilight

REVIEW Kristin Stewart stars as Bella, a young girl who moves to a small town and becomes instantly captivated by a classmate named Edward (Robert Pattinson) who is part of a very peculiar and insular family known as the Cullens. As Bella becomes more attracted to Edward, she discovers that the Cullens are a clan of vampires … but very safe emo-vampires who only drink animal blood and spend of most of their time silently emoting and looking pretty rather than preying on helpless victims. Thus begins an epic tale of forbidden love that has made the hearts of millions of teenage girls swoon.
Phil Brown/Metro Canada

Screen Times

This week's new releases are highlighted in red.

THESE PAGES COVER MOVIE START TIMES FROM FRI., DEC. 19 TO THURS., DEC. 25. TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

For reviews of Bedtime Stories, The Curious Case of Benjamin Button, The Spirit and Valkyrie pick up the Wed., Dec. 24 issue of Metro.

VANCOUVER

OMNIMAX SCIENCE WORLD
1455 Quebec St., 604-443-7443

Listings not available at press time.

CN IMAX THEATRE
201-999 Canada Place, 604-682-4629

The IMAX Nutcracker (STC) Fri-Thu 2-5-7
The Polar Express: An IMAX 3D Experience (G) Fri-Tue 12-3-8 Wed 12-3 Thu 3-8
Santa vs. the Snowman (STC) Fri-Wed 11-6 Thu 6

DUNBAR THEATRE
4555 Dunbar Street, 604-222-2991

Bolt (G) Fri-Wed 2-4-7
Valkyrie (PG) Thu 4-7

FIFTH AVENUE CINEMAS
2110 Burrard Street, 604-734-7469

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) Thu 4-7:30
Doubt (G) Fri-Tue 1:45-2:15-4-4:30-6:40-7:15-9-9:30 Wed 1:45-2:15-4-4:30-6:40-7:15 Thu 4:30-7:15-9:30
Milk (PG) Fri-Tue 1:15-4:20-7:05-9:40 Wed 1:15-4:20-7:05 Thu 4:20-7:05-9:40
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri-Tue 2-4:35-6:55-9:10 Wed 2-4:35-6:55
The Reader (18A) Thu 3:45-6:40-9:10
Slumdog Millionaire (14A) Fri-Tue 1:30-4:10-6:50-9:20 Wed 1:30-4:10-6:50 Thu 4:10-6:50-9:20

GRANVILLE
855 Granville St., 604-684-4000

Body of Lies (18A) Fri 1:35-4:15-6:55-9:35 Sat 6:55-9:35 Sun-Tue 1:35-4:15-6:55-9:35 Wed 1:35-4:15-6:55 Thu 4:15-6:55-9:35
Changeling (14A) Fri-Wed 1:30-4:30-7:45 Thu 4:30-7:45
A Christmas Tale (French w/e.s.t.) (PG) Fri-Wed 1:20-4:25-8 Thu 4:25-8
JCVD (PG) Fri-Tue 9:15 Thu 9:15
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Fri-Wed 1:45-4:10-7:10 Thu 4:10-7:10
Repo! The Genetic Opera (18A) Fri-Tue 1:50-4:20-7-9:20 Wed 1:50-4:20-7 Thu 4:20-7-9:20
Role Models (14A) Fri-Tue 1:40-4-7:05-9:25 Wed 1:40-4-7:05 Thu 4-7:05-9:25
Synecdoche, New York (14A) Fri-Tue 1:25-4:05-6:50-9:30 Wed 1:25-4:05-6:50 Thu 4:05-6:50-9:30

HOLLYWOOD THEATRE
3123 W. Broadway, 604-738-3211
hollywoodtheatre.ca

Listings not available at press time.

OAKRIDGE
650 West 41st Ave., 604-263-1944

Bedtime Stories (G) DTS Digital Thu 7-9:30
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) DTS Digital Fri 7:10-9:50 DTS Digital Sat-Tue 1:10-4:10-7:10-9:50 DTS Digital Wed 1:10-4:10
Marley & Me (G) Dolby Stereo Digital Thu 6:45-9:40
Twilight (PG) DTS Digital Fri 6:50-9:45 DTS Digital Sat-Tue 1-3:55-6:50-9:45 DTS Digital Wed 1-3:55
Yes Man (PG) Dolby Stereo Digital Fri 7-9:35 Dolby Stereo Digital Sat-Tue 1:20-4:20-7-9:35 Dolby Stereo Digital Wed 1:20-4:20 DTS Digital Thu 7:10-9:45

PACIFIC CINÉMATHÈQUE
1131 Howe Street, 604-688-3456
cinematheque.bc.ca

Chile puede (STC) Sun 9:10
Fiesta Patria (STC) Sun 7:15
Inti-Illimani (STC) Sat 4
The King of Idiots (STC) Sat 9:15
LALIFF: Radio Corazon (STC) Sun 4
Our Father (STC) Sat 7:15
Sex With Love (STC) Fri 9:35
Ugly Me (STC) Fri 7:30

PARK THEATRE
3440 Cambie Street, 604-876-2747

Australia (PG) Fri-Wed 4-7:30
Gran Torino (14A) Thu 4-7-9:30

RIDGE THEATRE
3131 Arbutus Street, 604-738-6311

The Boy in the Striped Pajamas (PG) Fri-Tue 4-9 Wed 4 Thu 4-9
Saving Luna (G) Fri 7 Sat-Sun 2-7 Mon-Thu 7

RIO ON BROADWAY
1660 E. Broadway, 604-878-Film
riotheatre.ca

Australia (PG) Fri 7:30 Sat-Sun 4-7:30 Mon-Wed 7:30
Black Christmas (STC) Fri 12
Gremlins (STC) Sat
The Nightmare Before Christmas (STC) Sat 12
Silent Night, Deadly Night (STC) Fri

SCOTIABANK THEATRE VANCOUVER
900 Burrard St., 604-630-1407

Bolt (G) Fri-Wed 1:30-4:10-6:45-9:20
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) No Passes Thu 12:30-4:30-8:30 No Passes Thu 1:30-5:30-9:30
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) No Passes Fri-Wed 12:50-3:45-7:10-10 No Passes Fri-Thu 1:20-4:15-7:40-10:30
Marley & Me (G) No Passes Thu 12:50-3:45-7:10-10
Metropolitan Opera: Thais (STC) Sat 9
Milk (PG) Fri-Thu 12:20-3:40-6:40-9:45
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri 12:40-1:10-3:50-4:20-6:50-7:20-9:40-10:10 Sat 1:10-3:50-4:20-6:50-7:20-9:40-10:10 Sun 12:40-1:10-3:50-4:20-6:50-7:20-9:40-10:10 Mon 12:40-1:10-3:50-4:20-7:20-9:40-10:10 Tue-Wed 12:40-1:10-3:50-4:20-6:50-7:20-9:40-10:10 Thu 12:40-3:50-6:50-9:40
The Spirit (14A) Thu 1:10-4:20-7:20-10:10
Twilight (PG) Fri 12:15-3:20-6:30-9:30 Sat 3:20-6:30-9:30 Sun-Wed 12:15-3:20-6:30-9:30
Yes Man (PG) No Passes Fri-Wed 12:30-1-3:30-4-7-7:30-9:50-10:20 No Passes Thu 12:45-1-3:30-4-7-7:30-9:50-10:20

TINSELTOWN
International Village, 88 West Pender, 3rd floor, 604-806-0799
cinemark.com

Australia (PG) Fri-Tue 1-3:30-4:30-7:55-9:15 Wed 1-3:30-4:30-7:55
Four Christmases (PG) Fri-Tue 12:05-1:15-3:20-5:40-6:55-8:05-10:25 Wed 12:05-1:15-3:20-5:40-6:55-8:05
Frost/Nixon (PG) No Passes Fri-Tue 1:20-2:35-4:10-5:20-7-8:15-9:50 No Passes Wed 1:20-2:35-4:10-5:20-7-8:15
The Secret of the Grain (STC) No Passes Fri-Tue 12:20-3:35-6:50-10 No Passes Wed 12:20-3:35-6:50
Seven Pounds (PG) No Passes Fri-Tue 12:35-2-3:25-4:50-6:15-7:40-9:05-10:30 No Passes Wed 12:35-2-3:25-4:50-6:15-7:40
Slumdog Millionaire (14A) No Passes Fri-Tue 1:50-4:40-7:30-10:20 No Passes Wed 1:50-4:40-7:30
The Tale of Despereaux (G) No Passes Fri-Tue 12:45-1:55-3:05-4:15-5:25-6:35-7:45-8:55-10:05 No Passes Wed 12:45-1:55-3:05-4:15-5:25-6:35-7:45
Vicky Cristina Barcelona (PG) No Passes Fri-Tue 12:25-3-5:30-7:50-10:15 No Passes Wed 12:25-3-5:30-7:50

VANCITY THEATRE
Vancouver International Film Centre
1181 Seymour Street, 604-683-Film, vifc.org

Faith and Wisdom (STC) Fri-Tue 7-8:45

VAN EAST CINEMA
2290 Commercial Drive, 604-251-1313

Seven Pounds (PG) Fri 7-9:25 Sat-Sun 4:35-7-9:25 Mon-Tue 7-9:25

NORTH SHORE

ESPLANADE 6
200 West Esplanade, 604-983-2762

Bedtime Stories (G) No Passes Thu 1:50-4:30-7:20-9:50
Bolt in Disney Digital 3D (G) Digital Presentation Fri-Wed 1:30-4:10-6:50-9:25 Digital Presentation Thu 1:30-4:10
Changeling (14A) Fri-Wed 12:45-3:40-6:40-9:35
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) No Passes Thu 12:40-4:20-8
Punisher: War Zone (18A) Fri-Wed 1:40-4:20-7:10-9:50
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri-Wed 12:55-3:30-7:15-9:55 Thu 7:15-9:55
Role Models (14A) Fri-Wed 1:20-3:50-6:45-9:15
Valkyrie (PG) Thu 12:55-3:50-7:10-10
Yes Man (PG) No Passes Fri-Wed 1:10-4-7-9:40 No Passes Thu 1:15-4-7-9:40

PARK & TILFORD
333 Brooksbank Ave., 604-985-3911

Australia (PG) Fri 7:20 Sat-Wed 12:10-3:40-7:20
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) No Passes Fri 7-10 No Passes Sat-Tue 12:50-3:25-7-10 No Passes Wed 12:50-3:25-7 No Passes Thu 3:25-7-9:45
Four Christmases (PG) Fri 6:40-9:25 Sat-Tue 12:40-3-6:40-9:25 Wed 12:40-3-6:40 Thu 3-7:10-9:25
Marley & Me (G) No Passes Thu 3:10-6:30-9:10
Metropolitan Opera: Thais (STC) Sat 9
Seven Pounds (PG) No Passes Fri 6:50-9:50 No Passes Sat-Tue 12:30-3:30-6:50-9:50 No Passes Wed 12:30-3:30-6:50 No Passes Thu 3:30-6:50-9:50
The Spirit (14A) Thu 3:20-6:40-9:30
The Tale of Despereaux (G) No Passes Fri 7:15-9:40 No Passes Sat-Tue 12-2:45-5-7:15-9:40 No Passes Wed 12-2:45-5-7:15 No Passes Thu 2:45-5-7:15-9:40
Twilight (PG) Fri 6:30-9:30 Sat 3:10-6:30-9:30 Sun-Tue 12:20-3:10-6:30-9:30 Wed 12:20-3:10-6:30

RICHMOND

RICHMOND CENTRE 6
6551 #3 Road, 604-273-7173

Bedtime Stories (G) No Passes Thu 4:40-7:10-9:40
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) No Passes Thu 4:20-7:50
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) No Passes Fri 4:35-7:10-9:45 No Passes Sat-Sun 1:50-4:35-7:10-9:45 No Passes Mon-Tue 4:35-7:10-9:45 No Passes Wed 4:35-7:10
Four Christmases (PG) Fri 4:40-7:20-9:40 Sat-Sun 1:55-4:40-7:20-9:40 Mon-Tue 4:40-7:20-9:40 Wed 4:40-7:20
Marley & Me (G) No Passes Thu 4:35-7:05-9:45
Seven Pounds (PG) No Passes Fri 4:15-7-9:50 No Passes Sat-Sun 1:30-4:15-7-9:50 No Passes Mon-Tue 4:15-7-9:50 No Passes Wed 4:15-7 No Passes Thu 4:15-7-9:50
The Tale of Despereaux (G) No Passes Fri 4:25-6:55-9:30 No Passes Sat-Sun 1:40-4:25-6:55-9:30 No Passes Mon-Tue 4:25-6:55-9:30 No Passes Wed 4:25-6:55 No Passes Thu 4:25-6:55-9:30
Twilight (PG) Fri 4:20-7:05-9:55 Sat-Sun 1:35-4:20-7:05-9:55 Mon-Tue 4:20-7:05-9:55 Wed 4:20-7:05
Yes Man (PG) No Passes Fri 4:30-7:15-10 No Passes Sat-Sun 1:45-4:30-7:15-10 No Passes Mon-Tue 4:30-7:15-10 No Passes Wed 4:30-7:15 No Passes Thu 4:30-7:15-10

SILVERCITY RIVERPORT
14211 Entertainment Way, 604-272-7280

Australia (PG) Fri-Wed 12:20-4:10-8
Bedtime Stories (G) No Passes Thu 12:20-2:50-5:20-7:45-10:20
Bolt (G) Fri-Thu 12:10-2:45-5:15-7:35-10
Chakk de Phatte (In Punjabi) (PG) Fri-Thu 1:40-5:10-9
Changeling (14A) Fri-Wed 9:55
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) No Passes Thu 11:55-3:55-8:15
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) No Passes Fri-Wed 12:30-1:20-3:30-4:30-6:55-7:20-10:10-10:35 No Passes Thu 1:20-4:30-7:20-10:35
The Day the Earth Stood Still: The IMAX Experience (PG) No Passes Fri-Thu 1-4-7-9:45
Doubt (G) Thu 1:25-4:05-7:20-9:55
Four Christmases (PG) Fri-Thu 12:45-3:55-6:50-9:25
Ghajini (Hindi w/e.s.t.) (STC) Thu 12:15-4:25-8:30
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Fri-Wed 12:35-3-5:15-7:50-10:05
Marley & Me (G) No Passes Thu 12:25-3:40-7:05-10:25
Metropolitan Opera: Thais (STC) Sat 9
Nothing Like the Holidays (PG) Fri-Wed 12:55-3:40
Punisher: War Zone (18A) Fri-Wed 1:45-4:45-7:55-10:30
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri-Wed 1-4-6:45-7:25-9:40-10:20 Thu 1-4-7:25-10:20
Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi (Hindi w/e.s.t.) (G) Fri-Thu 12:40-4:35-8:30
Role Models (14A) Fri-Wed 1:25-4:20-7:20
Seven Pounds (PG) No Passes Fri-Thu 12:15-3:30-7:15-10:15
The Spirit (14A) Thu 12:35-3:35-7:40-10:40
The Tale of Despereaux (G) No Passes Fri-Thu 12-2:30-5-7:25-9:45
Transporter 3 (14A) Fri-Wed 1:15-4:35-7:40-10:25
Twilight (PG) Fri-Thu 12:25-3:45-7:10-10:10
Valkyrie (PG) Thu 1:10-4:40-7:55-10:50
Yes Man (PG) No Passes Fri-Thu 12:05-3-6:45-9:45 No Passes Fri-Thu 1:05-4-7:30-10:30

BURNABY

DOLPHIN CINEMAS
4555 E. Hastings St., 604-293-0332

Closed for Renovations

SILVERCITY METROPOLIS
4700 Kingsway Ave., 604-435-7474

Bedtime Stories (G) No Passes Thu 12:30-3:20-7:05-10
Bolt (G) Fri-Wed 12-2:30-5-7:30-9:50 Thu 12-2:30-5-7:30
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) No Passes Thu 12:25-4:15-8
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) No Passes Fri-Wed 12:05-1-3-3:45-7-7:30-9:45-10:10 No Passes Thu 1-3:45-7:30-10:10
Four Christmases (PG) Fri-Wed 12:10-3:15-7:25-10 Thu 10:15
Marley & Me (G) No Passes Thu 12:10-3:15-6:30-9:45
Metropolitan Opera: Thais (STC) Sat 9
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri-Wed 12:45-3:55-7:20-9:55 Thu 9:55
Seven Pounds (PG) No Passes Fri-Thu 12:20-3:30-6:55-10
The Spirit (14A) Thu 12:05-3:05-7:20-10:05
The Tale of Despereaux (G) No Passes Fri-Wed 12:15-2:45-5:15-7:45-10:05 No Passes Thu 12:15-2:45-5:15-7:45
Transporter 3 (14A) Fri-Wed 12:30-3:20-7:15-10:15
Twilight (PG) Fri-Thu 12:15-3:10-6:50-9:40
Yes Man (PG) No Passes Fri-Thu 12:40-4-7:10-10:15

STATION SQUARE
220-6200 McKay Ave., 604-434-7711

Australia (PG) Fri 4:35-7:45 Sat-Sun 1:30-4:35-7:45 Mon-Thu 4:35-7:45
Changeling (14A) Fri 4:25-7:10-9:55 Sat-Sun 1:35-4:25-7:10-9:55 Mon-Tue 4:25-7:10-9:55 Wed 4:25-7:10 Thu 4:25-7:10-9:55
High School Musical 3: Senior Year (G) Fri 4:45-7:05-9:50 Sat-Sun 1:55-4:45-7:05-9:50 Mon-Tue 4:45-7:05-9:50 Wed 4:45-7:05 Thu 4:45-7:05-9:50
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Fri 4:40-7:15-9:45 Sat-Sun 1:50-4:40-7:15-9:45 Mon-Tue 4:40-7:15-9:45 Wed 4:40-7:15 Thu 4:40-7:15-9:45
Nothing Like the Holidays (PG) Fri 4:50-7:25-10:05 Sat-Sun 1:45-4:50-7:25-10:05 Mon-Tue 4:50-7:25-10:05 Wed 4:50-7:25
Punisher: War Zone (18A) Fri 4:55-7:35-10 Sat-Sun 2-4:55-7:35-10 Mon-Tue 4:55-7:35-10 Wed 4:55-7:35 Thu 4:55-7:35-10
Role Models (14A) Fri 5-7:30-10:10 Sat-Sun 2:05-5-7:30-10:10 Mon-Tue 5-7:30-10:10 Wed 5-7:30 Thu 5-7:30-10:10
Valkyrie (PG) Thu 4:50-7:25-10:05

NEW WEST/ COQUITLAM

SILVERCITY COQUITLAM
170 Schoolhouse Street, 604-523-2911

Australia (PG) Fri-Thu 11:55-4:05-8
Bedtime Stories (G) No Passes Thu 1-4-7-10
Bolt (G) Fri-Wed 12-3 Fri-Thu 12:45-3:45-6:45-9:45
Changeling (14A) Fri-Wed 2-6:15-9:45
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) No Passes Thu 12-2:40-3:55-6:35-8:10-10:15
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) No Passes Fri-Thu 12:40-1:40-3:40-4:40-6:40-7:40-9:40-10:40
Doubt (G) Thu 1:05-4:05-7:15-10:15
Four Christmases (PG) Fri-Wed 11:45-12:15-2-2:30-4:15-5-6:30-7:35-9-10:05 Thu 11:45-2-4:15-6:30-9
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Fri-Wed 12:10-2:25-4:50-7:05-9:35 Thu 12:10-2:25-4:50-7:05-9:30
Marley & Me (G) No Passes Thu 12:40-3:40-6:40-9:40
Metropolitan Opera: Thais (STC) Sat 9
Milk (PG) Fri-Wed 12:35-3:35-6:35-9:35 Thu 12:35-3:35-6:30-9:25
Nothing Like the Holidays (PG) Fri-Wed 12:25-3:25-6:25-9:25
Punisher: War Zone (18A) Fri-Wed 1:15-4:15-7:15-10:15
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri-Wed 1:45-4:45-7-7:45-10-10:45 Thu 1:45-4:45-7:45-10:45
Role Models (14A) Fri-Wed 12:20-3:20-6:20-9:20
Seven Pounds (PG) No Passes Fri-Thu 1:10-4:10-7:10-10:10
The Spirit (14A) Thu 1:35-4:35-7:35-10:35
The Tale of Despereaux (G) No Passes Fri-Thu 12:05-2:35-4:55-7:25-10
Transporter 3 (14A) Fri-Wed 1:20-4:20-7:20-10:20
Twilight (PG) Fri-Wed 12:55-3:55-6:55-9:55 Thu 12:55-3:55-7-9:55
Valkyrie (PG) Thu 12:30-3:30-6:35-9:35
Yes Man (PG) No Passes Fri-Thu 12:50-1:30-3:50-4:30-6:50-7:30-9:50-10:30

SURREY/WHITE ROCK/LANGLEY

CLOVA
5732-176th St., Surrey, 604-541-9527

Beverly Hills Chihuahua (G) Sat-Wed 3:20
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Sat-Wed 1:30
The Polar Express (G) Fri 4
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri-Tue 7
Twilight (PG) Fri-Tue 9:05

HOLLYWOOD 3 CINEMA
7125-138th Street, Surrey, 604-592-4441

Beverly Hills Chihuahua (G) Fri-Thu 12-2-4:30
Changeling (14A) Fri-Thu 12
High School Musical 3: Senior Year (G) Fri-Thu 12-2:10-4:30-6:40
Max Payne (14A) Fri-Thu 8:45
Punisher: War Zone (18A) Fri-Thu 9
RocknRolla (14A) Fri-Thu 6:30
Role Models (14A) Fri-Thu 2:50-4:50
Transporter 3 (14A) Fri-Thu 6:50-9

STRAWBERRY HILL GRANDE
12161-72nd Ave, Surrey, 604-501-9400

Bedtime Stories (G) No Passes Thu 1:30-4:40-7:15-9:50
Bolt (G) Fri-Wed 12:50-3:30-6:45-9:20
Chakk de Phatte (In Punjabi) (PG) Fri-Thu 12:30-3:50-7:30
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) No Passes Thu 12-3:45-7:50
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) No Passes Fri-Thu 1:20-4:50-7:20-9:45
Four Christmases (PG) Fri-Wed 1:40-4-6:50-9:30
Ghajini (Hindi w/e.s.t.) (STC) Thu 12:05-4:05-8:10
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Fri-Wed 12-2:20-4:40-6:55-9:10
Marley & Me (G) No Passes Thu 1:15-4-6:55-9:35
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri-Wed 1:30-4:35-7:15-9:50
Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi (Hindi w/e.s.t.) (G) Fri-Wed 12:20-1-4:10-5-8-9 Thu 12:20-4:10-8
Seven Pounds (PG) No Passes Fri-Thu 12:40-3:40-7:10:05
The Spirit (14A) Thu 1:10-4:20-7:05-10
The Tale of Despereaux (G) No Passes Fri-Thu 12:10-2:30-5:10-7:40-10:10
Twilight (PG) Fri-Wed 1:10-4:20-7:05-10
Valkyrie (PG) Thu 12:15-3:30-6:50-9:40
Yes Man (PG) No Passes Fri-Thu 1:50-4:30-7:10-9:55

STUDIO 12 GUILDFORD
15051-101st Ave, Surrey, 604-581-1176

Australia (PG) Fri-Wed 9
Bedtime Stories (G) No Passes Thu 1:50-4:45-7:20-9:40
Bolt in Disney Digital 3D (G) Fri-Thu 1:45-4:50-7:15-9:35
Chakk de Phatte (PG) Fri-Thu 1:05-4:25-7:30
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) No Passes Thu 1-4:30-8
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) Fri-Wed 1:05-1:35-4:15-4:40-6:55-7:25-9:25-9:55 Thu 1:35-4:40-7:25-9:55
Four Christmases (PG) Fri-Thu 1:25-4:10-6:50-9:15
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Fri-Wed 1:20-4-6:40
Marley & Me (G) No Passes Thu 1:20-4:05-6:45-9:20
Nothing Like the Holidays (PG) Fri-Wed 1:50-4:10-6:50
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri-Wed 1:40-4:30-7:20-9:50
Seven Pounds (PG) No Passes Fri-Wed 1:30-4:15-7-9:45 Thu 1:30-4:15-7-9:45
The Spirit (14A) Thu 1:40-4:20-7:05-9:30
The Tale of Despereaux (G) Fri-Thu 1:15-4:05-6:45-9:10
Transporter 3 (14A) Fri-Wed 9:15
Twilight (PG) Fri-Wed 1:10-4:20-7:05-9:55
Valkyrie (PG) Thu 1:10-4-6:55-9:50
Yes Man (PG) Fri-Thu 2-4:35-7:10-9:35

RIALTO
1732-152nd Street, White Rock, 604-541-9527, criterionheatres.com

Four Christmases (PG) Fri 7:10-9 Sat-Sun 2:10-7:10-9 Mon-Tue 7:10-9 Wed 2:10
Seven Pounds (PG) Fri 7-9:15 Sat-Sun 2-7-9:15 Mon-Tue 7-9:15 Wed 2

CRITERION 4 WHITE ROCK
2381 King George Highway, 604-531-7456, criterionheatres.com

Bolt (G) Fri 7:30 Sat-Mon 2:30-7:30 Tue 2:30 Wed 2:30-7:30
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) Fri 7:20-9:30 Sat-Mon 2:20-7:20-9:30 Tue 2:20 Wed 2:20-7:20-9:30
The Tale of Despereaux (G) Fri 7:10-9 Sat-Mon 2:10-7:10-9 Tue 2:10 Wed 2:10-7:10-9
Twilight (PG) Fri-Mon 9:25 Wed 9:25
Yes Man (PG) Fri 7-9:05 Sat-Mon 2-7-9:05 Tue 2 Wed 2-7-9:05

COLOSSUS LANGLEY
20090-91A Ave, Langley, 604-513-8747

Australia (PG) Fri-Tue 12:15-4:15-8:15 Wed 12:15-4:15 Thu 12:15-4:15-8:15
Bedtime Stories (G) No Passes Thu 1-4:05-6:55-9:45
Bolt (G) Fri-Wed 12:50-4 Thu 12-2:30-5:10-7:45-10:20 Fri-Tue 12-2:30-5:10-7:45-10:20 Wed 12-2:30-5:10-7:45
Changeling (14A) Fri-Tue 6:55-10:30 Wed 6:55
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) No Passes Thu 12-12:30-4-4:30-8-8:30
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) No Passes Fri-Tue 12-1:30-3:30-4:40-6:30-7:35-9:15-10:15 No Passes Wed 12-1:30-3:30-4:40-6:30-7:35 No Passes Thu 1:30-4:40-7:35-10:15
The Day the Earth Stood Still: The IMAX Experience (PG) No Passes Fri-Tue 1-4-7-9:45 No Passes Wed 1-4-7 No Passes Thu 1-4-7-9:45
Doubt (G) Thu 12:55-4:10-7:10-10:10
Four Christmases (PG) Fri-Tue 1:35-4:25-7:50-10:25 Wed 1:35-4:25-7:50 Thu 1:35-4:25-7:50-10:25
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Fri-Tue 12:25-2:50-5:15-7:35-9:50 Wed 12:25-2:50-5:15-7:35
Marley & Me (G) No Passes Thu 12:35-3:35-6:40-9:40
Metropolitan Opera: Thais (STC) Sat 9
Milk (PG) Fri-Tue 12:10-3:40-6:45-9:55 Wed 12:10-3:40-6:45 Thu 12:10-3:40-6:45-9:55
Nothing Like the Holidays (PG) Fri-Tue 12:30-3:35-7:10-9:55 Wed 12:30-3:35-7:10
Punisher: War Zone (18A) Fri-Tue 12:55-4:10-7:10-10:10 Wed 12:55-4:10-7:10
Quantum of Solace (14A) Fri-Tue 1:10-4:20-7:20-10:25 Wed 1:10-4:20-7:20 Thu 1:10-4:20-7:20-10:25
Role Models (14A) Fri-Tue 12:40-3:55-7-9:45 Wed 12:40-3:55-7
Seven Pounds (PG) No Passes Fri-Tue 12:20-3:50-7:15-10:30 No Passes Wed 12:20-3:50-7:15 No Passes Thu 12:20-3:50-7:15-10:30
The Spirit (14A) Thu 1:25-4:35-7:25-10:30
The Tale of Despereaux (G) No Passes Fri-Tue 12:05-2:35-4:55-7:25-10 No Passes Wed 12:05-2:35-4:55-7:25 No Passes Thu 12:05-2:35-4:55-7:25-10
Transporter 3 (14A) Fri-Tue 1:20-4:35-7:40-10:20 Wed 1:20-4:35-7:40
Twilight (PG) Fri-Tue 12:45-3:45-7:05-10:05 Wed 12:45-3:45-7:05 Thu 12:45-3:45-7:05-10:05
Valkyrie (PG) Thu 12:40-3:55-7-10:05
Yes Man (PG) No Passes Fri-Tue 12:35-1:15-3:25-4:15-7-7:30-10-10:30 No Passes Wed 12:35-1:15-3:25-4:15-7-7:30 No Passes Thu 12:35-1:15-3:25-4:15-7-7:30-10-10:30

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The bestselling albums at Amazon.ca
1. And Winter Came, Enya; **2.** A Winter Symphony, Sarah Brightman; **3.** Sugar Mountain: Live At Canterbury House 1968, Neil Young, left; **4.** Day And Age, The Killers; **5.** Soul, Seal. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Music

A falling out with celebrity

UNIVERSAL MUSIC PHOTO

Folie à Deux, the new album from Fall Out Boy, takes aim at celebrity excess.

BRYAN BORZYKOWSKI
for Metro Canada

If anyone knows a thing or two about celebrity culture, it's Fall Out Boy. The Chicago-turned-L.A. pop punk band doesn't just live near Hollywood, they live the whole paparazzi eluding, party hopping experience. So it's no surprise that their new album, Folie à Deux, is all about celebrity excess.

"This record is strongly influenced by Hollywood," says lead singer Patrick Stump.

"It's about watching western culture deal with fame and how we've diluted everything to the point of just product."

Rallying against the nature of celebrity is somewhat ironic coming from a band who counts Pete Wentz, a gossip rag favourite, as a member. The bassist has had a complicated relationship with fame. From his genitals being plastered all over the Internet to a widely publicized marriage with Ashley Simpson, he's no stranger — and in turn the rest of the band — to the Hollywood machine.

Stump's well aware that some might think it's odd for the group to take such a staunch stand against pop culture, but he doesn't think it's strange. "It's really easy to not be inside it even if you are inside of it," he explains.

"There are two different people who end up in tabloids, people who are there by accident and people who are desperate to maintain their popularity. We've all been part of the former."

As for Wentz, Stump makes no apologies for his bassist's celebrity status. But he vehemently points out that he's no fame whore. "It's very frustrating," he says. "He does wonderful things because of it. We've all been able to contribute to organizations we strongly believe in, we committed a lot of money to No on (California's) Proposition 8, and we almost made it to Antarctica to bring Green Peace there. We got to do them because we're utilizing celebrity. That's the way Pete sees it, we can get something out fame. He's never been as vapid as people hope he would be."

> **"There are two different people who end up in tabloids, people who are there by accident and people who are desperate to maintain popularity."**
> Patrick Stump

The album's themes don't just manifest themselves in the lyrics, the music — a blend of high energy '80s rock and their familiar punk riffs — is also a response to America's obsession with celebrity. Stump explains that the '80s are back and "in the worst possible way."

"We've fallen into Wall Street excess. Cocaine is back in fashion and everyone is full of crap," he says. "That's what I wanted the album to sound like. Still, it's fun too. If you don't know what I'm talking about you can appreciate it on a purely aesthetic level."

So with Stump so turned off by his current home's insipid values, will he move back to The Windy City? "I have never officially moved here," he quickly points out. "I haven't been back to Chicago in a year, but I still have my place there."

Metro recommends

• AMADOU & MARIAM, WELCOME TO MALI:

African couple deftly blends their musical roots with a myriad of modern styles for a superb new and original sound.

• THE FLAMING LIPS, CHRISTMAS ON MARS:

Film score mixes ominous electronic soundscapes and fanciful strings for a healthy dose of engaging weirdness.

• WE WISH YOU A METAL XMAS AND A HEADBANGING NEW YEAR:

Old-school rockers blast through boring holiday standards with a metal energy that's both ferocious and fun.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Cancer Bats draft southern invasion plans

BRIAN TOWIE
Metro Canada

Cancer Bats have returned to the belfry, at least for now.

The Toronto-based purveyors of punk and metal are back in Canada after a two-and-a-half month touring schedule across Europe in support of their sophomore release Hail Destroyer, playing four gigs in Ontario and one in Montreal before jetting off again for several U.K. dates and the Rockstar Energy Drink Taste Of Chaos Tour which will take them across the U.S.

The Bats will more than likely spend their January pooling song ideas for their next album, says frontman Liam Cormier. Life on the road doesn't afford them much time to put pen to paper.

"We're not a jammy type of band," he said. "On tour, we'll write lyrics and music on our own, and then share the ideas with the other three (guitarist Scott Middleton, drummer Mike Peters and bassist Jaye R. Schwarzer) and make sure everyone is on board with what we're going to do. It's all heavy, but that's why you hear different stuff in our songs. Scott will write more metal and I'll write more punk and hardcore stuff."

PHOTO HANDOUT

Toronto hardrock outfit Cancer Bats hope to gain some U.S. exposure during the Taste Of Chaos Tour.

The band hopes to finally go over in the U.S. during the Taste Of Chaos Tour, says Cormier, who notes that gaining popularity south of the border, especially for Canadian hard rock bands, is "a tough nut to crack." But circumstances play in their favour: This year Kerrang! — a widely read magazine by U.S. metal fans — gave Hail Destroyer it's highest rating possible and nominated it for its 2008 Album Of The Year. Big audiences are expected for the tour that has showcased acts like My Chemical Romance and Silverstein, and Cormier hopes his outfit gains a similar profile.

"We've done the U.S. eight or nine times. It's hard," Cormier said. "Bands like ours, Billy Talent, Alexisonfire, we'll really gain a fan base here and in Europe. Then we'll go to the States and not get the same kind of response. But it's a big positive for us. This will be one of the biggest tours of our year and we'll play in front of some huge crowds."

Speaking of Alexisonfire — the band Cancer Bats credits with putting them on the map — Cormier would like to make clear that the spoofing of City & Colour (Dallas Green's solo project) in their videos French Immersion and Pneumonia Hawk was the brainchild of George Pettit, Green's co-vocalist.

"It was his idea!" laughs Cormier. "George was in a couple of our videos and he was like, 'We have to bust Dal again.' Dallas sees this stuff, rolls his eyes and says, 'Get off my back.'"

Swift tops the charts

Teen country star Taylor Swift reclaimed her crown on the U.S. pop album charts this week. Swift's second release, Fearless rose one place to the top after selling 249,000 copies during the week ended Dec. 14. REUTERS

Music

Morrissey signs with roots label

Morrissey has signed with Nashville-based roots label Lost Highway for the U.S. release of his new album, sources told Billboard.

Years of Refusal will be released on Feb. 17, and will be supported by a U.S. theater tour that kicks off Feb. 28 in Boca Raton, Fla., and runs through April 15 in Albuquerque, N.M.

The project marks the follow-up to the former Smiths frontman's 2006 set Ringleader of the Tormenters. It will come out internationally on Feb. 2 via Universal, which bumped the album from a fall 2008 release for unspecified reasons.

Lost Highway is an intriguing destination for Morrissey, as it is most commonly associated with roots- and country-leaning acts such as Ryan Adams, Willie Nelson, Lyle Lovett and Lucinda Williams. The label is also the U.S. home for Van Morrison and Elvis Costello.

Morrissey's last few releases were handled by Sanctuary Music Group, whose U.S. recorded-music operations were shuttered last year after Universal bought the ailing firm. REUTERS

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This Day In Music History
Maurice White of Earth, Wind & Fire was born in Memphis, Tenn., on Dec. 19, 1944. REUTERS

Music

Sebastien Grainger takes charge

JIM REYNO
Metro Canada

Once it's out there, there's no turning back — and that's a good thing for Sebastien Grainger & the Mountains.

The band has been touring extensively for the past two years with, as Grainger says, "very little material out there." That changed in October when the debut album Sebastien Grainger & the Mountains was finally released.

"I'm excited just for the people to have the songs in their heads," said Grainger, former drummer/vocalist of dance-punk duo Death From Above 1979. "And for when we go out to play them, for people to know what we're doing and know what the songs are … But it has been a special trajectory to have the opportunity to play for a substantial amount of people without having that advantage. It's going to be interesting to see what the next phase is once people know the record."

The self-titled debut is Grainger's first full-length release since Death From Above 1979's gold-selling album You're a Woman, I'm a Machine, which was released four years ago. Sebastien Grainger & the Mountains is less aggressive (not necessarily softer) than DFA79, more personal and with more precise hooks.

PHOTO COURTESY OUTSIDE MUSIC

Sebastien Grainger's debut solo album Sebastien Grainger & the Mountains is now available in stores.

It is also pretty well Sebastien solo. Grainger intended the album to be a band record, but …

"As I was going through the process of recording, I found myself having trouble communicating exactly what my ideas were," he said. "Given the fact that I'm able to play the instruments on the record, I just decided it would be easier to just do it myself most of the time."

But taking charge doesn't mean taking over completely. Grainger says he took a "carefree approach to certain parts of the record." Sometimes, less than perfect is just perfect.

"I was like, you know what? … I could keep re-recording these parts and get them perfect, but I was losing the spontaneity and the humanity of the thing," Grainger said. "So what ended up happening is, I would commit to takes and performances. I would listen to it from an outsider's perspective, or try to listen to it from an objective place.

"As a result, it's a live-sounding record, a record that has this humanity."

Next up, taking the record live. Grainger has scheduled U.S., Canadian and European dates in the months ahead.

"I really feel like this record will find its audience, regardless of what publicity's done for it," Grainger said. "I think the people that need to hear it — or should hear it — will eventually hear it."

In concert

- Sebastien Grainger plays the Vogue Theatre Sunday through Dec. 23.

Tune out the holiday cheer with these non-traditional songs

SoundCheck

Alan Cross
alan@ongoinghistory.com

If you're anything like me, you're close to OD'ing on Christmas music treacle. I tried to get some shopping done the other day, but after hearing Jose Felicano sing Feliz Navidad yet again, I suddenly realized that I'd rather blowtorch my own toes off than be subjected to more of the same dusty holiday music that's been making the rounds since Coca-Cola invented Santa Claus in the 1920s.

With that in mind, here's another list of decidedly non-traditional holiday songs that really should be more popular:

• **Police Nabbed My Dad/Bobnoxious:** This London, Ont., group have been sending me Christmas songs for the last couple of years and I've loved 'em all. Nothing like a song about your dad being sent to jail set to the tune of the aforementioned Feliz Navidad. Get it at bobnoxiousrock.com.

• **Joseph, Better You Than Me/Killers feat. Elton John:** When I spoke to Brandon Flowers last month about their third Christmas single, guitarist Dave Keuning was in another suite in Toronto's Pantages hotel laying down the final guitar tracks. Brandon says that Joseph doesn't get the credit he should for his role in the Christmas story and this song attempts to address that. Listen for Neil Tennant of the Pet Shop Boys to sweeten the vocals about halfway through. Proceeds to Bono's (RED) foundation. Available on: iTunes.

• **Santa Claus Is Coming to Town/BWC Christmas Orchestra:** If you liked Springsteen's take on this one, you might want to stay away from the near death-metal vocals of this version. Available on: BWC Studios Presents: A Very Metal Christmas.

I'd rather blowtorch my own toes off than be subjected to more of the same dusty holiday music that's been making the rounds.

• **Oh Little Town of Deathleham/Killdozer:** Definitely not the kind of thing you'll want to play whengGrandma comes over for Christmas dinner. A bit dysfunctional, to put it mildly. Available on: Hardcore Holiday

• **Christmas Is Going to the Dog/Eels:** A deceptively happy sounding song from son of the physicist who invented the Many Worlds Theory.

• **The Cat Carole/Meryn Cadell:** Possibly the sweetest (and saddest!) of all the modern Christmas songs. I tear up just thinking about it. Truly beautiful. Available at: catcarol.com

The Ongoing History of New Music can be heard on stations across Canada. Read more at ongoinghistory.com and exploremusic.com.

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Carry On actor Jack Douglas dead at 81

Jack Douglas, the British actor best known for his role in the hit Carry On films, died yesterday. He was 81. His agent Phil Dale said Douglas passed away on the Isle of Wight, where he lived with his partner Viven Howell. REUTERS

Entertainment

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Playboy needs different approach: Hefner's sons

MAGAZINE Look for Playboy magazine to adopt an edgier editorial tone and classier nude pictorials if Hugh Hefner's teenage sons take the helm of the 55-year-old magazine some day.

Marston Hefner, an 18-year-old college student, and his 17-year-old brother Cooper said in an interview published in the magazine's January issue that change is inevitable at the struggling publication.

"Down the road, I'd say it would probably need to take a different direction," said Marston, noting he would rather strike out on his own first.

"In the 1960s we had amazing civil rights leaders doing interviews or writing stories for the magazine. The fight is still out there. The civil rights movement may not be that big, but we could still do articles on edgy things that people are afraid to talk about and appeal to forward thinkers."

Cooper said he "definitely" wants to be involved with the company because he likes business.

"I'd want the girls to be presented more as they were in the pictorials back in the 1950s and 1960s -- kind of artsy, classy."
Cooper Hefner

"I'd want the girls to be presented more as they were in the pictorials back in the 1950s and 1960s — kind of artsy, classy. I would like to bring back that retro-class feel," he said.

The magazine has fallen on hard times, losing up to $10 million US annually, chief financial officer Linda Havard said earlier this month. REUTERS

HBO Hung up on series

CABLE HBO is hung up on Hung.

The pay cable network has picked up the dark comedy pilot starring Thomas Jane to series.

The order for the project, from The Riches creator Dmitry Lipkin and Colette Burson, is said to be for 10 episodes, with the launch eyed for June.

Jane (The Punisher) plays Ray, a well-endowed struggling high school basketball coach who figures out a way to use his best asset.

The sexual aspect will be a major source for comedy but not the main focus of the series, said Lipkin and Burson, who are already writing Episode 5.

"It has its sexual moments, but the show is very much about what's happening in the country, how people are trying to survive using what God has given them," Lipkin said.

"It has its sexual moments, but the show is very much about ... how people are trying to survive using what God has given them."
Dmitry Lipkin

Most of the actors in the pilot, including Jane, Jane Adams, Sianoa Smit-McPhee and Charlie Saxton, will continue on the series, slated to begin production early next year. REUTERS

Germans embrace Valkyrie

After a year of Sturm and Drang in Germany surrounding Tom Cruise's Second World War movie Valkyrie, local critics have largely embraced the finished film.

Tom Cruise stars as would-be Hitler assassin Claus Schenk Garf von Stauffenberg in Valkyrie.

In a sign of the anticipation and trepidation that surrounds the project — which tells the story of a failed assassination attempt on Adolf Hitler — local critics rushed to opine on Valkyrie immediately after the film's world premiere in New York this week.

"Maybe not the masterpiece we might have dreamed of ... but not much less," said Tobias Kniebe of broadsheet Sueddeutsche Zeitung, a sentiment shared by many of his comrades.

Controversy has dogged Valkyrie and Cruise — who plays would-be Hitler assassin Claus Schenk Graf von Stauffenberg — from the start.

In addition to reports, real and rumoured, of on-set mishaps, shooting bans and lawsuits, there was a firestorm of protest in the German media. Most of it centred on Cruise's association with the Church of Scientology and whether he could be trusted with the Stauffenberg story.

"Mr. Cruise, go home!" bellowed Stauffenberg's son Berthold Graf Stauffenberg in one infamous headline.

Now the tone has changed. While there have been some nasty reviews — "with his performance, Tom Cruise has finally destroyed his reputation as an actor" sniped one Berlin critic — the majority have applauded Valkyrie as both as a history lesson and as a film.

And while Stauffenberg's son hasn't yet given his verdict, his sister, Konstanze von Schulthess-Rechberg, who attended the New York premiere, declared the film "a success."

Valkyrie opens wide in the United States on Dec. 25 and in Germany on Jan. 22. REUTERS

Old World Series game to launch network

BASEBALL The MLB Network will premiere on New Year's Day with the original telecast — commercials and all — of New York Yanees pitcher Don Larsen's perfect game in the 1956 baseball World Series.

The game, which was televised on NBC, was thought to have been lost to history. But several years ago, a collector discovered a kinescope version that begins in the second inning and continues throughout the end. Before the videotape era, kinescopes were a popular way of recording TV shows. They were usally created by placing a movie camera in front of a television monitor and recording the image off the monitor's screen while the program was being aired.

It will be the first time the contest has been televised since the October day 52 years ago.

Yankees' announcer Mel Allen and Brooklyn Dodgers' announcer Vin Scully do the play-by-play. Larsen is the only pitcher ever to throw a perfect game during the World Series.

The MLB channel will sign on at 6 p.m. ET with a live Hot Stove studio show that will introduce the network and update what's happened in baseball since the World Series. The Yankees-Dodgers game begins at 7 p.m. Hot Stove continues live every weekday at 7 p.m. through the month. REUTERS

What's ahead

- Also on tap for the network is live coverage of the Hall of Fame selection, documentaries on the Negro Leagues on Martin Luther King Jr. Day and one-hour episodes looking back at specific years in Major League Baseball.

Headline News changing its name in the new year
At the end of what will be a record year for viewership, CNN's Headline News is getting a name change. The 26-year-old news channel will be known as HLN. REUTERS

Entertainment

Perception, deception, desire and Salvador Dali

Surrealist Salvador Dali is known for his elongated figures and wilting clocks, but an exhibition about myth in his art reveals a more personal side of the legendary Spanish painter.

The exhibit at the Salvador Dali Museum in Florida includes paintings and prints of Greek and Roman deities that were inspired by his readings of Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, whom he met in 1938.

"A lot of people think of Dali as a surrealist, but there is a lot earlier and then later, in his classical style," said Sharon Sparkman, a guide at the museum, which has one of the most comprehensive collections of his work.

"Freud said Dali did a good job of self-analysis."

Although Dali studied Freud for more than four decades, he met the psychologist only once when he presented him with a painting of Narcissus, a hero in Greek mythology who falls deeply in love with himself.

"Dali was drawn to this myth for several reasons, the interweaving of truth and deception, desire and the power of illusion," said museum spokeswoman Kathy White.

"Dali was drawn to (the myth of Narcissus) for several reasons, the interweaving of truth and deception, desire and the power of illusion."
Kathy White

"He knew Freud would be drawn to the trompe l'oeil illusionistic painting, which he was," she added.

At the core of the museum exhibit are 16 prints from the 1960s, part of Dali's classical period which began in the 1940s.

Assistant Curator Dick Armstrong noted the tension in the negative images of a father figure in the exhibit, including Saturn. The Roman god of agriculture is shown devouring children and with a drawer littered with bones emerging from his forehead.

A prolific writer, Dali said he cut drawers into the subconscious, and he wrote about his father cutting off contact. Dali's father disowned his son after the artist began a relationship with a Russian-born woman, whom he later married.

In the work "Memory of the Child-Woman" Dali refers to Oedipus, a symbol of rivalry between father and son for the affection of the child's mother. It also features William Tell, the Swiss bowman who shot an apple off his son's head. Dali saw the legends as symbolizing paternal power and threat. REUTERS

Italy **Cruising with Sophia Loren**

REUTERS/CIRO DE LUCA

Veteran Italian actress Sophia Loren is applauded after cutting the ribbon to launch the new MSC Fantasia cruise ship in Naples yesterday.

Sci Fi widening 'Ghost Hunters' franchise to include reality TV

TELEVISION Sci Fi Channel is expanding its Ghost Hunters franchise through a multipart agreement that includes dozens of hours of reality programming.

The network has given the green light to six episodes of a college edition of the paranormal series, tentatively titled Ghost Hunters: New Generation.

Sci Fi also has ordered a sixth season of the Hunters flagship and a second season of the International spinoff.

In addition, creator Craig Piligian has signed an agreement for an as-yet-undetermined series separate from the Hunters brand with an eye toward a 2010 premiere date.

Hunters has been one of the network's top ratings performers The most recent season averaged 2.8 million viewers per week.

"We're going to try to have a little more fun with the franchise."
Craig Piligian

"It's going to be more of a teaching format," Piligian said. "We're going to try to have a little more fun with the franchise." The spinoff features franchise regulars Steve Gonsalves and Dave Tango training students who will accompany them on paranormal investigations. Episodes also could include stops in thematic locations, like spring break hot spots. REUTERS

Berlin film festival for young people tackles tough topics

GERMANY Drink, drugs, guns and prostitution.

Judging by the subject matter of the selected films, the Berlin International Film Festival's children and youth sidebar has come of age.

The British drama Cherrybomb stars Harry Potter sidekick Rupert Grint as a teenager out for a wild weekend of stealing and substance abuse.

Katja's Sister looks at prostitution among Russian immigrants in Amsterdam. Lala's Gun is a coming-of-age story revolving around a Chinese boy's journey to deliver a gun to his father.

And My Suicide, by U.S. director David Lee Miller, tells the story of a teen romance between a geek and the most beautiful, but twisted, girl in school.

But the initial lineup for Generation 2009, announced Wednesday, also includes some more traditional kiddie fare.

Movies include Lippel's Dream, a fantasy tale based on the best-selling book by Paul Maar and featuring German stars Moritz Bleibtreu, Anke Engelke and Christiane Paul.

For the first time, the Generation sidebar will include a documentary: The Inheritors from filmmaker Eugenio Polgovsky, which examines the legacy of hard work in a Mexican family.

The final Generation titles will be announced in early January.

The 2009 Berlin Film Festival is set to run Feb. 5-15. REUTERS

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Star Trek actress dies

Actress Majel Barrett Roddenberry, the widow of Star Trek creator Gene Roddenberry and a member of the show's cast, died on Thursday at the age of 76. REUTERS

Television

A Deloitte study found older people are more likely to watch TV.

Young people watch less TV: Study

TELEVISION Young Americans just aren't watching TV like they used to.

Put another way, the older you get, the more you watch, according to a report due out Thursday from Deloitte indicating that "millennials," the generation of ages 14-25, watch just 10.5 hours of TV a week. That compares with 15.1 hours for those belonging to Generation X (ages 26-42), 19.2 hours for baby boomers (43-61) and 21.5 hours for matures (62-75).

Lest one assume millennials are shunning broadcast and cable in favor of watching DVDs on their TV screens, they're not. They spend less time watching DVDs of movies and TV shows on television sets, 4.8 hours a week, than do Gen Xers. They are, though, spending more time watching DVDs on a computer — 1.9 hours a week — than any other age group.

But while millennials are watching the least TV, they are spending the most time with media in general, making that up with video games, music and the Internet. REUTERS

Madea creator Tyler Perry faces Marshall

How does one of Hollywood's most successful players end up living for nearly two weeks at a Holiday Inn Express in east Texas?

Tyler Perry can blame the peculiarities of federal copyright litigation for a sojourn this month to the dusty city of Marshall.

With a population of 25,000, the home of the annual Fire Ant Festival has become a virtual company town for high-stakes intellectual property cases because of its speedy docket and a reputation for juries prone to large plaintiffs' verdicts.

As popular as Marshall is for patent battles, however, so-called "soft IP" cases like copyright remain a novelty, especially one involving an entertainment mini-mogul whose films and plays have grossed around $1 billion in boxoffice and DVD sales.

Forget Madea Goes to Jail. This was Madea Goes to Court.

Perry and Lionsgate, which releases his films, were sued in May 2007 by Donna West, a Dallas playwright. She claimed that Perry stole portions of her play Fantasy of a Black Woman to create his 2005 breakthrough film Diary of a Mad Black Woman, which introduced moviegoers to Perry's plus-sized alter ego, Madea. West claimed the infringement entitled her to all the profits from the film, which grossed about $50 million domestically.

Under copyright law, West was required to show that her play and Perry's film are substantially similar and that Perry had access to her work, so she argued among other things that the titles are similar, both are tales of divorce among black couples and both feature a scene involving an abusive man becoming paralyzed.

On the access issue, West claimed she performed the play three times in 1991 in a Dallas theater and that the theater's manager could have slipped it to Perry in 1998 when he presented his plays there.

(Marshall) become a virtual company town for high-stakes intellectual property cases because of its speedy docket and ... juries prone to large plaintiffs' verdicts.

"That would have meant that Tyler had access to every play at every theater everywhere around the country," says Veronica Lewis, the Dallas lawyer who set up camp in Marshall as Perry's lead trial counsel.

Given the tenuous nature of the access argument, the matter probably should have been dismissed long before trial, as many idea-theft cases are in Los Angeles.

"We were certainly aware of the history of cases in Marshall, and we took that into consideration in preparing our defense," says Jim Gladstone, Lionsgate's executive vp business and legal affairs. For instance, both sides were permitted only 12 hours to present their cases, requiring witness testimony to be short and sweet.

Jurors were treated to a private showing of Perry's Diary and a reading by West of her play. Screenwriter Bob Gale (Back to the Future) made the trek to one of the only federal courthouses with free and ample parking to serve as an expert witness for Perry. Gale explained the screenwriting process and how the two works weren't all that similar.

In the end, despite its reputation, the East Texas jury took less than two hours to select a foreman and return a defense verdict for Perry.

"I have nothing bad to say about Marshall," says Gladstone, who awaits a likely appeal. "We liked everyone. True Southern hospitality." REUTERS

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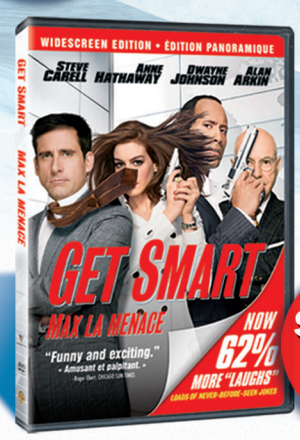

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New face on 90210

Matt Lanter is the next newbie to arrive on 90210's West Beverly campus. The actor will play Liam, a bad boy who's ready to rile up the hallways, People reports. IMDB.COM

Television

Animated metalheads flourish

IntelleVision

rick.mcginnis@metronews.ca

BRUTAL: I can no longer give a convincing impression of someone whose world has been transformed by Jay Leno on prime-time, and there's only so much I can say about Canadian Idol's yearlong "rest" without bursting into this disturbing giggle, so I thought I'd take a moment to talk about the second season of my favorite show, now on DVD just in time for Christmas.

You don't have to have grown up in a working class suburb in the '70s to love heavy metal, but it certainly helps. And as far as I can tell, metal fans generally love Metalocalypse, even though it viciously satirizes everything they hold dear. If you haven't managed to catch its brief appearances on Teletoon's adult-only Detour programming block, the premise is simple enough — Dethklok is the biggest band in the world, growing from the 13th to the seventh-largest economy in the world over the course of the show's two seasons. Try to imagine, say, that Slayer or Cannibal Corpse could cause international riots, or prompt debates at the United Nations.

The band — a mix of American and Scandinavian louts — are morons, and when they aren't endlessly debating how to do the most metal thing, they're unsuccessfully dealing with their intimacy issues, or the fact that they're lousy at doing anything that doesn't involve double-kick triplets or singing about flesh-eating zombies.

"Metalocalypse is probably the most perfect take on metal's essence – morbid and epic megalomaniac teenage-boy fantasies alongside tawdry, lower-middle-class anxieties."

Not that the world needed such a thing, but Metalocalypse is probably the most perfect take on metal's essence — morbid and epic megalomaniac teenage-boy fantasies alongside tawdry, lower-middle-class anxieties, executed with plenty of metal's graphic flourishes: skulls and swords and bat's wings, and skulls with bat's wings, and swords with skulls, and bat's wings on swords. You get the picture.

Season two follows where season one left off —with the band staggering one step closer to the Armageddon predicted in the show's title, and the shadowy conspirators of The Tribunal monitoring them for their own vague reasons. And then there's the band, with their pitiful solo projects, family problems and momentary obsessions with hallucinogenic drugs known only to Amazon tribes, which inspires a brief tribute to Werner Herzog's 1982 film Fitzcarraldo.

The show is at its best when little or nothing is going on but the sorts of digressive, numbskull conversations most men have had a few hundreds of in their lives, enlivened by a few moments of incredibly graphic violence. Basically, it's like spending a night in front of an Xbox with a bunch of boys — teenage or older — ungoverned by female influences, if only for a few precious hours.

Rick McGinnis writes about music, movies, books and television, but not opera.

FRIDAY

VA	Vu	SC	C	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime	251	308	3 CBC	Coronation St.	Jeopardy! (N)	The Secret of the Nutcracker (2008) Premiere.			Little Mosque	CBC News: The National (N)		(:05) The Hour
	255	358	6 JOY	E News	The Insider	Momma's Boys (CC)		Inside Hollywood (CC)		20/20 (CC)		News (N)
	250	321	9 CTV	etalk (N)	Hollywood	Rita MacNeil's Christmas		Eight Days to Live (2006, Drama) Kelly Rowan. (CC) (DVS)				News (N)
	252	336	11 GTV	Entertainment	ET Canada	90210 "Secrets and Lies"		Life "Trapdoor" (N) (CC)		NUMB3RS "Frienemies" (N)		News (N)
	256	389	12 VI	Instant Star	TMZ (N) (CC)	Wife Swap "Heene/Martell"		Don't Forget the Lyrics! (N)		Stargate SG-1 "Bad Guys"		News (CC)
	253	359	13 CITY	Law & Order: SVU		Friends (CC)	Friends (CC)	Friends (CC)	Friends (CC)	Crusoe "Hour 6 -- Long Pig"		EP Daily
	-	-	14 CW	Deal-No Deal	Deal-No Deal	Hates Chris	The Game	Hates Chris	The Game	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Frasier (CC)
	289	381	15 CBS	Entertainment	The Insider	Ghost Whisperer (N) (CC)		NUMB3RS "Tabu" (CC)		NUMB3RS "Frienemies" (N)		News (N)
	287	379	16 NBC	Evening Mag.	Inside Edition	Cancer Breakthroughs		Dateline NBC (CC)				News (N)
	288	380	21 ABC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Wife Swap "Heene/Martell"		Supernanny "Quinn Family"		20/20 (CC)		KOMO 4 News
	290	382	23 FOX	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Smarter Than a 5th Grader?		Don't Forget the Lyrics! (N)		News (N)	Most Wanted	Family Guy
news	502	390	26 NW	CBC News: the fifth estate		CBC News: The National (N)		CBC News: The National		CBC News: the fifth estate		National
	500	500	33 CNN	Anderson Cooper 360 (CC)				Larry King Live		Anderson Cooper 360 (CC)		Cooper 360
sports	407	419	22 RSP	Skiing: Alpine		Hockey	World Sport	Best Damn Sports Show		Sportsnet Connected (Live)		Sportsnet
	400	400	30 TSN	Curling 2008 Continental Cup -- Men's Team Competition. From Camrose, Alta. (Live) (CC)						SportsCentre (Live) (CC)		SportsCentre
family	552	543	25 YTV	Christmas With the Kranks ★★ (2004) Tim Allen. (CC)				Smallville "Fracture" (CC)		Dark Oracle	Mystery Hnt.	Mystery Hnt.
	555	545	50 TEL	Gremlins ★★★ (1984, Fantasy) Zach Galligan, Phoebe Cates. Premiere.					Futurama	Father	Chicken	Life's a Zoo
variety	268	354	5 KNO	Hockey: A People's History		The Royal (N) (CC)		Dalziel & Pascoe (CC)		Buena Vista Social Club ★★★ (1999)		
	575	583	20 CMT	Karaoke Star "Finale"				Donner Down	The Gift	Chevy Cross Canada Countdown "Christmas"		
	615	520	31 A&E	CSI: Miami "Sex & Taxes"		Criminal Minds (CC)		CSI: Miami "Money Plane"		CSI: Miami "Game Over"		CSI: Miami
	521	560	34 TLC	Dress	Dress	What Not to Wear (CC)		Dress	Dress	What Not to Wear "Tamara"		Real Simple
	616	522	39 SHO	The Best Years		The Guard "Live Free" (CC)		Testees (N)	Kenny-Spenny	Webdreams	Webdreams	Sin Cities
	294	650	47 TBS	Anchorman: Legend of Ron		Sex and-City	Sex and-City	Jumanji ★★ (1995) Robin Williams, Bonnie Hunt. (CC) (DVS)				Bad News
	603	561	52 FN	Diner, Drive-In	Diner, Drive-In	Ace of Cakes	Ace of Cakes	Challenge Fruit sculptures.		Chef Abroad	The Wild Chef	Diner, Drive-In
	320	621	60 CEN	Sanctuary "Instinct" (N) (CC)		The 11th Hour ★★★ (2007) Premiere. (CC)			(:45) Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street (2007)			
	581	566	101 MTV	Whitney: City	The Hills	After Show	Cribs (CC)	A Double Shot of Love (CC)		The Hills	The Hills	Made (CC)

12/19/08

SATURDAY

VA	Vu	SC	C	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime	251	308	3 CBC	NHL Hockey Chicago Blackhawks at Vancouver Canucks. (Live) (CC)					HNIC -- After Hours		News (CC)	HNIC Replay
	255	358	6 JOY	E News	The Soup	Scenes	Scenes	Dr. 90210 "Regeneration Gap"		Inside Hollywood Breaking up.		E News
	250	321	9 CTV	Conversation-Prime Minister		Playing House (2006) Colin Ferguson. (CC) (DVS)				Law & Order: SVU		News (N)
	252	336	11 GTV	Santa Claus Parade (CC)		Doc "Leader of the Band"		Painkiller Jane (CC)		Kenny-Spenny	Kenny-Spenny	News (N)
	256	389	12 VI	New Canoe	Island Week	The Road to Avonlea		Kool Countdown (CC)		Stargate Atlantis		Bravo! Fact
	253	359	13 CITY	Survivorman (CC)		Crusoe (N) (CC)		Too Cool for Christmas (2004) George Hamilton, Donna Mills.				Role
	-	-	14 CW	CSI: NY "YoungBlood" (CC)		Boston Legal (CC)		Boston Legal (CC)		CSI: NY "Manhattan Manhunt"		CSI: Miami
	289	381	15 CBS	Entertainment Tonight (N)		Elf ★★★ (2003, Comedy) Will Ferrell, James Caan. (CC)				48 Hours Mystery (N) (CC)		News (N)
	287	379	16 NBC	Backroads	Inside Edition	Crusoe (N) (CC)		WWE Tribute to the Troops		Law & Order: SVU		News (N)
	288	380	21 ABC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy!	I Want a Dog-Charlie Brown		Dr. Seuss' The Cat in the Hat ★★ (2003) Mike Myers.				KOMO 4 News
	290	382	23 FOX	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Cops (CC)	Cops (CC)	America's Most Wanted		News (N)	Most Wanted	MADtv (CC)
news	502	390	26 NW	Christmas Confidential (CC)		Sat. Report	Weekend	Sat. Report	Mansbridge	Christmas Confidential (CC)		Sat. Report
	500	500	33 CNN	D.L. Hughley-News		Special Investigations		Larry King Live		D.L. Hughley-News		Investigations
sports	407	419	22 RSP	English Premier League Soccer Teams TBA. (Same-day Tape)				The Ultimate Fighter		Sportsnet Connected (Live)		Poker
	400	400	30 TSN	NFL Football		Curling 2008 Continental Cup -- 'B' Skins Competition. From Camrose, Alta.					SportsCentre	SportsCentre
family	552	543	25 YTV	The Christmas That Almost Didn't Happen			National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation 2: Cousin Eddie				Dark Oracle	Mystery Hnt.
	555	545	50 TEL	Annabelle	A Dennis the Menace Christmas (2007) Robert Wagner.				Futurama	Gremlins ★★★ (1984) Zach Galligan.		
variety	268	354	5 KNO	National Geographic Specials		Heartbeat "Changing Roles"		Midsomer Murders "Vixen's Run" (N) (CC)				Montreal Jazz
	575	583	20 CMT	(6:00) Home Alone ★★★		Grand Ole Opry Live		Home Alone ★★★ (1990) Macaulay Culkin, Joe Pesci.				Countdown
	615	520	31 A&E	The Sopranos "Pine Barrens"		The Sopranos "Amour Fou"		CSI: Miami "Losing Face"		CSI: Miami (CC)		The Sopranos
	521	560	34 TLC	Trading Spaces (CC)		Crazy Christmas Lights (CC)		More Crazy Christmas Lights		Trading Spaces (CC)		Little People
	616	522	39 SHO	About a Girl	Kink in Hair	His and Her Christmas (2005) Paula Devicq. Premiere.				Sin City ★★★ (2005) Jessica Alba. (CC)		
	294	650	47 TBS	Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby			Swordfish ★★ (2001, Suspense) (PA) John Travolta. (CC)				Into the Blue ★★ (2005) (PA)	
	603	561	52 FN	Kitchen Nightmares (CC)		The F Word		Challenge (CC)		Top Chef (CC)		Nightmares
	320	621	60 CEN	Hunting Prty	Golden	Wild West Comedy Show			(:45) Pathfinder ★★ (2007, Adventure) Karl Urban. (CC)			
	581	566	101 MTV	After Show	After Show	After Show	After Show	After Show	After Show	MTV Live	MTV News	After

12/20/08

SUNDAY

VA	Vu	SC	C	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime	251	308	3 CBC	Mickey-C'mas	Grinch-C'mas	National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation ★★ (1989) (CC)				CBC News: Sunday Night (N)		News (CC)
	255	358	6 JOY	Mysteries	Mysteries	Extreme Makeover: Home		His and Her Christmas (2005) Paula Devicq, Dina Meyer. (CC)				News (N)
	250	321	9 CTV	Corner Gas	Corner Gas	The Rankin Family Reunion		Would Be Kings (2008) (Part 1 of 2) Currie Graham, Ben Bass.				News (N)
	252	336	11 GTV	16:9 Picture	American Dad	The Simpsons	King of Hill	Family Guy	American Dad	ReGenesis "China" (CC)		News (N)
	256	389	12 VI	Funniest Home Videos		Million Dollar Password (N)		Cold Case "Wings" (N) (CC)		Stargate Atlantis		New Canoe
	253	359	13 CITY	2Half Men	2Half Men	According-Jim	According-Jim	According-Jim	According-Jim	Less-Kind	Less-Kind	Role
	-	-	14 CW	Jericho "Walls of Jericho"		Three Amigos! ★★ (1986) Chevy Chase, Steve Martin.				Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Cold Case
	289	381	15 CBS	60 Minutes (CC)		Million Dollar Password (N)		Cold Case "Wings" (N) (CC)		The Unit "Switchblade" (N)		News (N)
	287	379	16 NBC	NFL Football: Panthers at Giants			M. Holmgren	Dateline NBC (CC)		Law & Order: Criminal Intent		News (N)
	288	380	21 ABC	Funniest Home Videos		Extreme Makeover: Home		Extreme Makeover: Home		Desperate Housewives (CC)		KOMO 4 News
	290	382	23 FOX	American Dad	American Dad	The Simpsons	King of Hill	Family Guy	American Dad	News (N)	Q It Up Sports	House (CC)
news	502	390	26 NW	Princesses of the World (N)		Charles Other Mistress (CC)		CBC News: Sunday Night		Princesses of the World		Hobbit Enigma
	500	500	33 CNN	Newsroom		D.L. Hughley-News		Larry King Live		D.L. Hughley-News		Investigations
sports	407	419	22 RSP	Boxing Jelena Mrdjenovich vs. Lindsey Scragg.				The Ultimate Fighter		Sportsnet Connected (Live)		Sportsnet
	400	400	30 TSN	NFL Football: Panthers at Giants			SportsCentre (Live) (CC)		Golf Chevron World Challenge -- Final Round.			SportsCentre
family	552	543	25 YTV	(6:00) Jack Frost ★★ (1998)		SpongeBob	Mystery Hnt.	The Next Star "The Duet"		Falcon Beach "Starting Over"		Mystery Hnt.
	555	545	50 TEL	Looney Tunes Christmas		Tom & Jerry: A Nutcracker Tale			Futurama	Gremlins 2: The New Batch ★★★ (1990)		
variety	268	354	5 KNO	National Geographic Specials		Doc Martin "The Two of Us"		The Whistleblowers (CC)		Dalziel & Pascoe (CC)		Montreal Jazz
	575	583	20 CMT	Paul Brandt's Christmas		Live & Up Front: Doc Walker		The Sons of Mistletoe (2001, Drama) Roma Downey.				Paul Brandt's
	615	520	31 A&E	CSI: Miami "Born to Kill"		CSI: Miami (CC)		CSI: Miami "Nailed" (CC)		CSI: Miami "Kill Switch"		CSI: Miami
	521	560	34 TLC	World's Smallest People		Incredibly Small		Girl Who Never Grew (CC)		World's Smallest People		Small People
	616	522	39 SHO	The Guard "Waheguru" (CC)		Christmas Caper (2007) Shannen Doherty. Premiere.				The Island ★★ (2005) Ewan McGregor. (CC)		
	294	650	47 TBS	(:10) Sahara ★★ (2005) (PA) Matthew McConaughey, Steve Zahn. (CC)					(:40) RV ★★ (2006) Robin Williams, Jeff Daniels. (CC)			
	603	561	52 FN	In Search of Perfection (CC)		Unwrapped Holiday treats.		12 Days of Cookies (CC)		Dinner: Impossible (CC)		Ornaments
	320	621	60 CEN	I Want a Dog	The Great Debaters ★★★ (2007) Denzel Washington. (CC)				(:45) Planet Terror ★★★ (2007, Horror) Rose McGowan. (CC)			
	581	566	101 MTV	After Show	After Show	After	MTV News	Made "Pop Singer" (CC)		Cribs (CC)	Cribs (CC)	After Show

12/21/08

McCartney tops Idol wish list

Former Beatle Paul McCartney and pop star Britney Spears are at the top of Simon Cowell's celebrity wish list as possible mentors on the upcoming season of American Idol.

McCartney

But the chances of getting McCartney to appear on the most-watched American show seem slim.

"We try every year to get Paul McCartney on but for whatever reason he won't come on," the British judge told reporters on a conference call.

Cowell said he would welcome the chance to see Spears on the show, which begins its eighth season on Jan. 13. The singer is on a comeback roll with a No.1 album and tour after almost two years of personal woes. "She would be first on the list. I would love to see her mentor the contestants. But if she doesn't want to do that and she wants to come on the show to perform, I would welcome her any time," Cowell said. REUTERS

In brief

TV REPORT Young Americans just aren't watching TV like they used to. It seems the older you get, the more you watch, according to a report released yesterday from Deloitte indicating that "millennials," the generation of ages 14-25, watch just 10.5 hours of TV a week. That compares with 19.2 hours for baby boomers (43-61) and 21.5 hours for matures (62-75).

REUTERS

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Coquitlam Plaza
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(604) 931-5332
Westwood Plateau Village
(604) 464-5862
Como Lake Village
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Courtenay Crossing Mall
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DELTA
Sunshine Hills Shopping Centre
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LANGLEY
Fraser Park Shopping
(604) 530-3422
Willowbrook Park Shopping Centre
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Pacific Colanade
(604) 463-2231
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Lougheed Mission Plaza
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Prairie Mall
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(604) 301-1836
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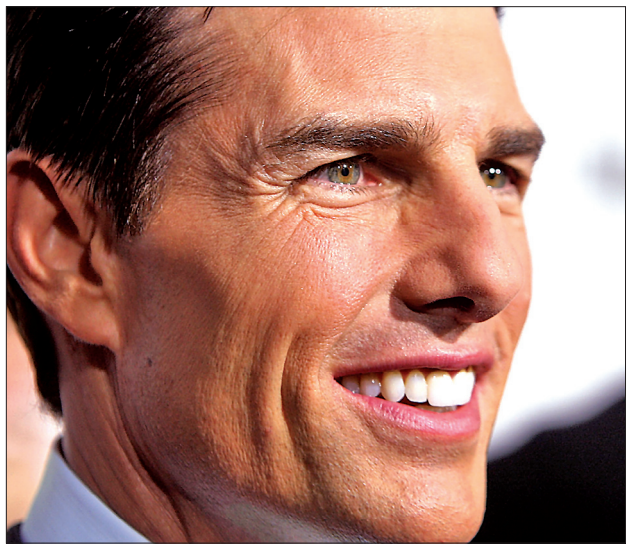
Paris presents herself

Paris Hilton's customized Pink Bentley has arrived. The hotel heiress recently bought the Christmas present to herself worth an estimated $200,000 US. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Going Out

Metro's 7th Heaven: Metro taps what's hot right now



1 Cruising around

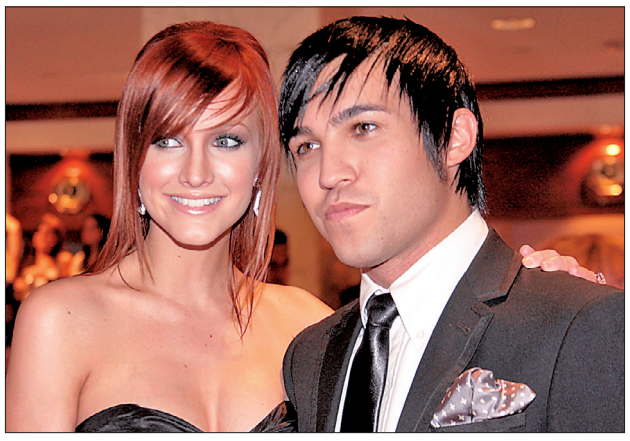
Actor Tom Cruise is back in the spotlight again, this time plugging his Second World War thriller Valkyrie, which hits theatres Christmas Day.

2 Awards season

Movie awards season is well underway, with Golden Globe nominees recently announced, and several film critics' associations having named their top films of the year. Oscar nominations will be announced Jan. 22.

3 Geek chic

Large glasses, long socks and checked shirts have been spotted on the likes of pop star Madonna and Fall Out Boy's Pete Wentz, heralding a fashion trend to take fashionistas by storm next year, femalefirst.co.uk reports.



4 Oh, baby

Bronx Mowgli, the name of singer Ashlee Simpson and Pete Wentz's son, has been crowned the worst celebrity baby name of 2008. About 5,000 visitors to BabyNames.com voted the moniker the most disliked male baby name of 2008. Jagger Joseph Blue — the daughter of actress Soleil Moon Frye and Jason Goldberg — was deemed the worst girl's name.

5 Another celebrity designer?

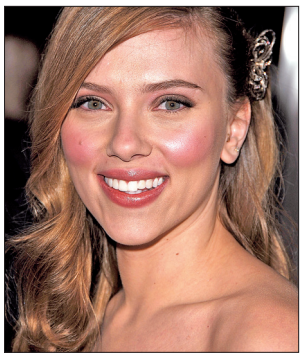
Katy Perry may start a fashion line, E! News Online reports. The singer says she's always experimented with clothes and cites model Agyness Deyn and burlesque star Dita Von Teese as her fashion icons.

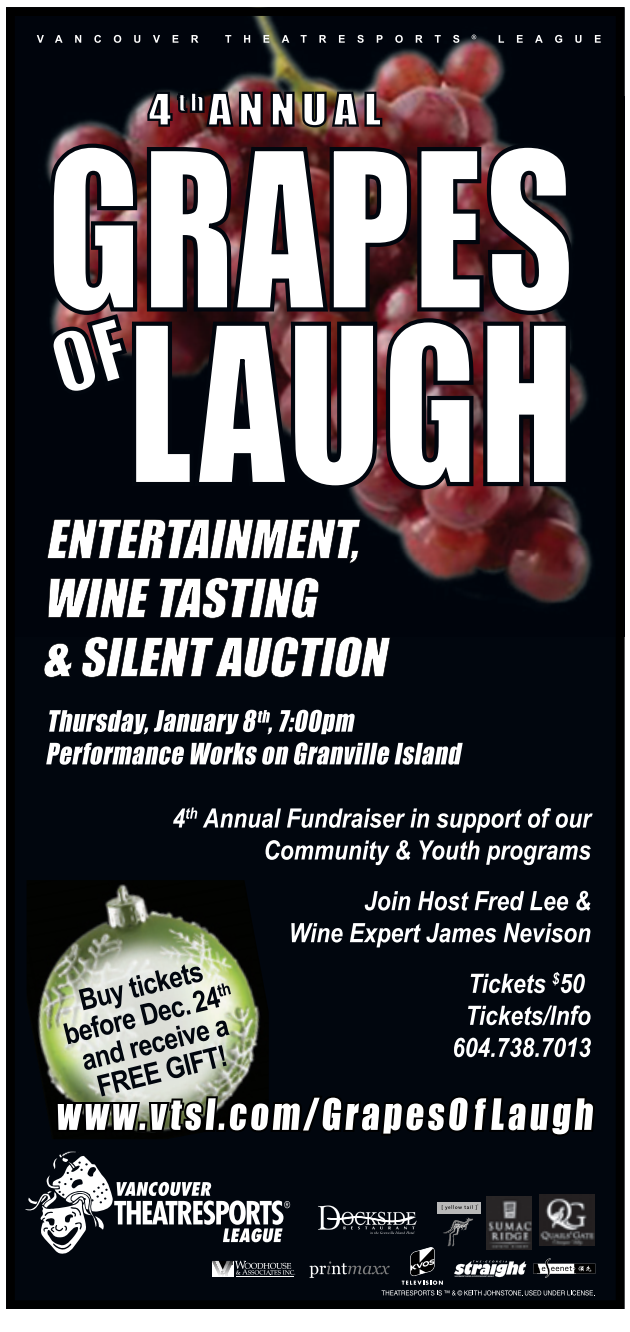
6 Back at the top

Harry Potter series author J.K. Rowling is back on top with The Tales of Beedle the Bard, currently the No. 1 best-seller on Amazon.ca.

7 Scarlett exposure

Actress Scarlett Johansson has been all over the place lately, first co-hosting the Nobel Peace Concert on Dec. 11, then slamming Cosmopolitan U.K. magazine for printing an interview with her she says she never gave, and now comes news she's thinking about putting out another album.

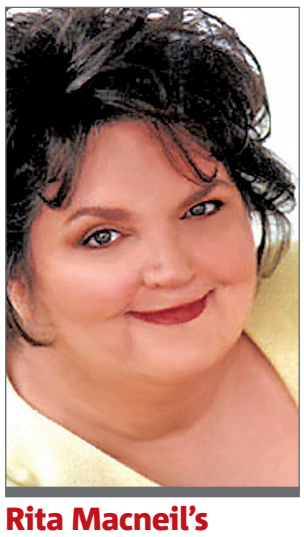




Mix of Six

HOT & HAPPENING WEEKEND EVENTS AROUND THE CITY

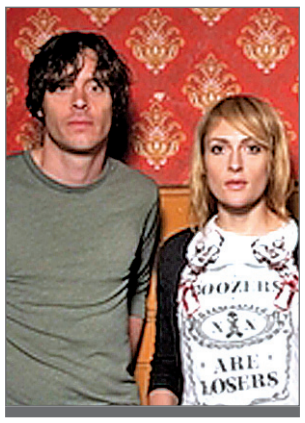
For more great events around the city, visit: **metronews.ca/entertainment**



Rita Macneil's Christmas

When: Friday, 7 p.m.
Where: Centre In Vancouver For Performing Arts

Rita Macneil stops in Vancouver during her tour to sing some of her Christmas favourites. Macneil, from the community of Big Pond, N.S., has been performing on stage since the early 1970s.



Jingle Bell Rock 2008 feat. Metric and Tokyo Police Club

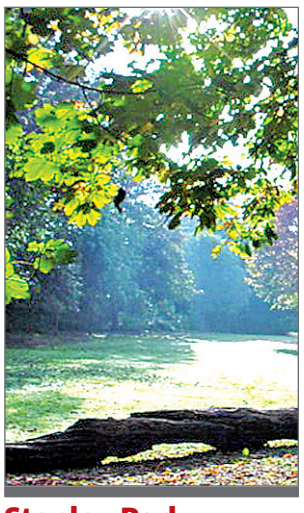
When: Sunday, 7 p.m.
Where: Vogue Theatre

Metric, shown, is a Canadian new wave/indie rock band that was formed in 1998 and based in Toronto. Tokyo Police Club are an indie rock band from Newmarket, Ont. They will be performing in Vancouver until Tuesday.

A Charles Dickens Evening

When: Saturday, 7 p.m.
Where: Roedde House Museum, 1415 Barclay St.

A series of fireside readings by Cam Cathcart, Don Mowatt, and Carolyn Finlay. Piano music will accompany the retelling of some of Charles Dickens' most famous works. Visit roeddehouse.org.



Stanley Park Solstice Walk

When: Sunday, 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Where: Stanley Park

Naturalist Jennifer Swanston leads a walk through the woods discussing the lore behind the plants and decorations that are associated with the season. General admission is $10.

Winter Harp in Concert

When: Saturday, 7:30 p.m.
Where: St. Andrew's Wesley Church, 1022 Nelson St.

Winter harp is an ensemble of harps, violin, medieval instruments, percussion poetry and song. This event will include songs and stories in celebration of the Christmas and winter season. Tickets are $32. Visit winterharp.com.

Nutcracker 3D at The IMAX Theatre

When: Saturday, 10 a.m.
Where: The IMAX Theatre at Canada Place

A showing of the Nutcracker 3D, with proceeds to Strathcona Community Centre's Food Security for Children Program. Tickets are available online at and at the door (subject to availability) for a donation of $5.

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2748 Rupert St.
1 - 525 Seymour St.
150 - 625 Howe St.
105 - 950 West Broadway
1707 Robson St.
1092 Kingsway
10 - 3490 Kingsway

Aldergrove
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Abbotsford
Sevenoaks Shopping Centre
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1 - 2142 Clearbrook Rd.
401 - 2140 Sumas Way

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Lougheed Mall
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111 - 3823 Henning Dr.
204B - 3430 Brighton Ave.

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Cottonwood Mall
103 - 45300 Luckakuck Way
11 - 45905 Yale Rd.
7544B Vedder Rd.

Cloverdale
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Coquitlam
Coquitlam Centre
101 - 3278 Westwood St.
5 - 3000 Lougheed Hwy.
2700B Barnet Hwy.
22 - 2988 Glen Dr.
2 - 901 Lougheed Hwy.

New Westminster
Royal City Centre

Delta
Scottsdale Mall
7235 120th St.
1517 56th St.

Langley
Walnut Grove Town Centre
Willowbrook Shopping Centre
3 - 19638 Fraser Hwy.
103 - 19700 Langley Bypass
C104 - 20159 88th Ave.
19971 96th Ave.
C7 - 20202 66th Ave.

Maple Ridge
22661 Lougheed Hwy.

Mission
100 - 32670 Lougheed Hwy.
318 - 32555 London Ave.

North Vancouver
Capilano Mall
127 - 1199 Lynn Valley Rd.
1295 Marine Dr.
1748 Lonsdale Ave.
1392 Main St.

Port Moody
202 Newport Dr.

Pitt Meadows
735 - 19800 Lougheed Hwy.

Richmond
Aberdeen Centre
Admiralty Centre Mall
Ironwood Mall
Lansdowne Mall
Parker Place
Richmond Centre
115 - 12571 Bridgeport Rd.

Surrey
Central City Shopping Centre
Guildford Town Centre
201 - 13734 104th Ave.
135 - 12477 88th Ave.
2404 King George Hwy.
1675 128th St.
108 - 7380 King George Hwy.
403 - 15940 Fraser Hwy.
10310A 152nd St.

West Vancouver
Park Royal Shopping Centre
North/South

White Rock
Semiahmoo Shopping Centre
10 - 3189 King George Hwy.

OKANAGAN/NORTHERN BC

Aberdeen Mall (Kamloops)
Northills Centre (Kamloops)
Orchard Park Mall (Kelowna)
Spall Plaza (Kelowna)
Cherry Lane Shopping Centre (Penticton)
Pine Centre (Prince George)
Piccadilly Mall (Salmon Arm)
Village Green Mall (Vernon)

Whistler
7009 Nesters Rd.

Squamish
38116 2nd Ave.

Piven quits Broadway after doctors' diagnosis
Leading man Jeremy Piven has suddenly split from the critical and commercial hit Broadway revival of David Mamet's Speed-the-Plow, citing doctors' diagnosis that he's suffering a high mercury count, Variety reports. **PEOPLE.COM**

Celebrity Buzz

Inauguration tops Scarlett's wishlist

PEOPLE Scarlett Johansson stopped by The Tonight Show with Jay Leno this week and told Jay what she's asking Santa for this Christmas.

The 24-year-old actress, who is an outspoken Barack Obama supporter, expressed her desire to attend the Inaugural Ball, femalefirst.com reports. "From Santa I would like a ticket to the Inaugural Ball," she says. "That's what I want, Santa."

MSN.COM

'No need for money': Emma

PEOPLE Emma Watson has "no need for money in her life," femalefirst.co.uk is reporting.

The Harry Potter actress — estimated to be worth £13 million — says, "The wealth side of it hasn't hit me yet because I have no need for money in my life. My life will not be motivated by money."

The 18-year-old also insists she has not adopted a lavish lifestyle, and still uses public transport.

"I have a more normal life than people expect," she told USA Today. "People are like, 'That girl looks like the girl from Harry Potter, but it can't be her on the train.'"

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Jolie and Pitt say no to TV

PARENTING When the holiday season rolls around, Brad Pitt says he and Angelina Jolie aren't big spenders for their brood of six, preferring making crafts to giving pricey presents, people.com reports.

With their luxe lifestyle, how do the youngsters avoid craving tons of holiday loot? By nixing TV.

"The kids don't ask for the big gifts for the reason that they don't see a lot of the American cartoon television, which is packed with all those manipulative commercials for big toys that look so fantastic," says papa Pitt.

"When they do see that stuff is when they start asking for the toys, so we figure if they don't see them, they won't know they're there. So we have gifts, but we try to keep the money spent to a minimum."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Whitney's stepmom sues over dad's cash

LEGAL Whitney Houston is being sued by her stepmother for allegedly ignoring the wishes of her late father, femalefirst.co.uk is reporting.

In the lawsuit filed in a federal court in Newark, the 45-year-old singer is accused of improperly keeping the proceeds of her dad John Houston's $1-million insurance policy.

Whitney's stepmother Barbara Houston claims the money was meant to pay off the $723,000 mortgage on John's Fort Lee condominium, in New Jersey, where she still lives.

Whitney holds the mortgage on the property. John died from cardiac arrest in 2003, aged 82.

Barbara also claims her late husband wanted the remaining insurance money to go to her.

Lawyers for Whitney and her stepmother declined to comment on the lawsuit.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Jodie's relapse led to custody woes?

PEOPLE A judge made a temporary ruling Wednesday that Jodie Sweetin's custody over eight-month-old daughter Zoie must only be in Sweetin's parents' home (where she currently lives) or in her parents' presence, people.com is reporting.

The judge made his ruling after Sweetin recently underwent an emergency investigation by an Orange County, Calif., family court for allegations of substance abuse raised by her estranged husband.

Her estranged husband, Cody Herpin, tells People that his "main concern" is to "keep Jodie clean and safe."

Herpin's lawyer, Robert Benavente, tells People the reason for the investigation of Sweetin is "primarily alcohol [abuse] but there's also concern regarding methamphetamines."

"Jodie absolutely has not relapsed into using meth," Sweetin's lawyer Wilma Presley tells People. "She merely confessed to having several glasses of wine over dinner recently and felt guilty about that. She is currently in a 12-step program and is working hard on her sobriety. She wants to be clean and sober from everything."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

GETTY IMAGES PHOTOS

Depp ready to marry longtime partner?

RELATIONSHIP Johnny Depp has reportedly bought an engagement ring for partner Vanessa Paradis, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

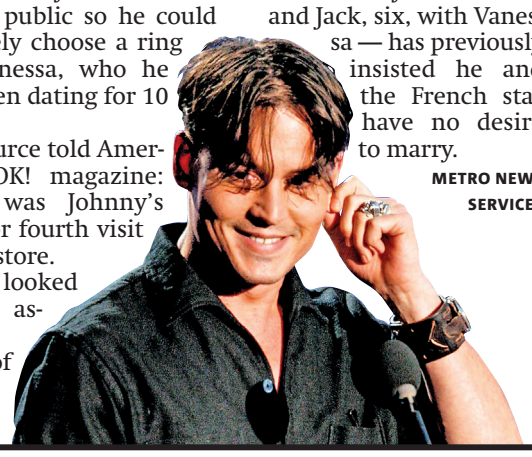
The 45-year-old actor asked a high-end California jewellery store to close to the public so he could privately choose a ring for Vanessa, who he has been dating for 10 years.

A source told America's OK! magazine: "This was Johnny's third or fourth visit to the store.

"He looked at an assortment of classic solitaire diamond rings in platinum settings — a really beautiful selection of elegant and understated rings and made a very large purchase."

Johnny — who has two children, Lily Rose, nine and Jack, six, with Vanessa — has previously insisted he and the French star have no desire to marry.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



No more kids, Smith insists

CHILDREN Will Smith doesn't want any more kids, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The 40-year-old actor and his wife Jada Pinkett Smith — who raise three children together — are instead looking forward to becoming grandparents.

Will said: "Jada and I sat down and asked, 'Where do we see ourselves (in 40 years)?' ... We don't have more children — we have grandchildren."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Moss making sexy lingerie

CAREER Kate Moss is set to design and model a range of sexy lingerie, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The British beauty has extended her contract with U.K. high street fashion chain Topshop for another three years and can't wait to start work on the new lines — which also includes a range of shoes — due in March.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Taylor talks after tooth surgery

PEOPLE It takes more than having her wisdom teeth removed to keep down Taylor Swift, people.com reports.

The singer has been blogging through the pain, keeping fans posted on her recovery. And the pain? "I'm feeling it," she wrote.

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Today Sunny -6°/ -9°

Saturday Mainly sunny -4° / -6°

Sunday 90% 5-10cm of snow 0°/ -12°

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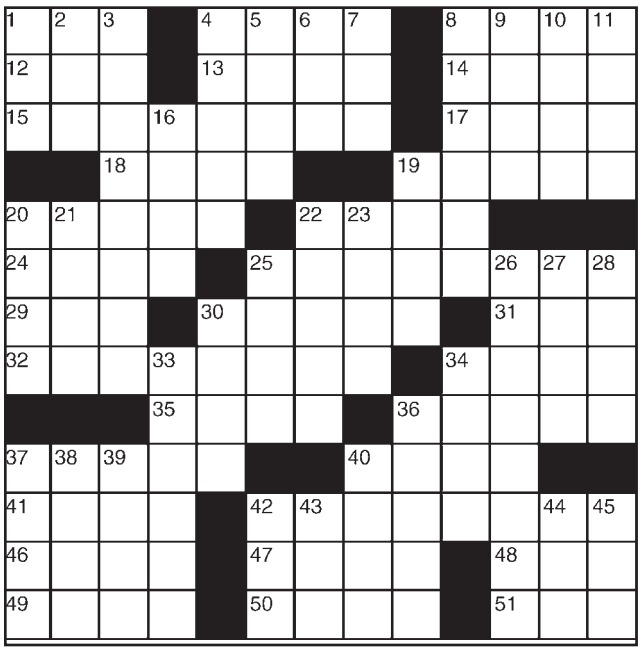
Take Five



Crossword across

1 Spasm
4 Greenish-blue
8 — Bader Ginsburg
12 Historic time
13 Mandlikova of tennis
14 Birthright barterer
15 Gilligan, notably
17 Immediately upcoming
18 Veer
19 Bullwinkle's foe
20 Emulate da Vinci
22 Sketch
24 Shrek is one
25 Us
29 25-Across, e.g.
30 Corridors
31 Lubricant
32 Courtroom punishment
34 They give a hoot
35 Forest trek
36 Breathlessness?
37 Bottom point
40 Detail, for short
41 Out of the storm
42 Unable to show versatility
46 Czech or Pole
47 Session with a shrink
48 Vast expanse
49 Stevenson villain
50 Make — meet
51 X rating?

Crossword down

1 Sleuth, for short
2 A Gershwin brother
3 Rigid
4 Graph
5 Exhibit ennui
6 Literary collection
7 Aye undoer
8 Fame
9 Addict
10 Urban transport
11 Shacks
16 Melody
19 Ovine vocabulary
20 Spacecraft compartments
21 Chills and fever
22 "La — Vita"
23 Legislation
25 Tug hard
26 Sad
27 Marathon fraction
28 "Born Free" lioness
30 Estate recipient
33 Rob
34 Mostly Mideastern cartel
36 Mimics
37 Doggerelist Ogden
38 Partner in crime
39 Out of play
40 Tater
42 Commonest English word
43 Thither
44 Witness
45 Erstwhile M&M's hue

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

3		4	2				6	
				7				
				5	3			1
7		5			8	1		
1		2				9		6
		3	5			4		8
9			7	8				
				9				
	2				6	5		3

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

B	L	A	B	■	B	E	D	■	K	E	P	I		
L	A	V	A	■	E	A	R	■	O	X	E	N		
O	M	I	T	■	R	U	E	■	S	T	A	N		
C	A	V	I	T	Y	■	S	C	A	R	■	■		
■	■	■	S	I	L	K	S	C	R	E	E	N		
S	M	O	T	E	■	L	E	D	■	M	A	O		
H	A	V	E	■	D	I	D	■	J	E	T	S		
E	S	E	■	H	E	M	■	P	U	S	S	Y		
S	C	R	E	E	N	T	E	S	T	■	■	■		
■	■	T	A	R	T	■	M	I	L	D	E	W		
T	H	I	S	■	I	M	P	■	A	R	I	A		
S	O	M	E	■	S	A	T	■	N	A	R	Y		
P	E	E	L	■	T	R	Y	■	D	Y	E	S		

8	7	1	4	2	5	6	3	9
2	3	5	1	6	9	8	7	4
9	4	6	7	8	3	1	5	2
4	1	3	8	9	2	5	6	7
6	2	7	5	3	4	9	1	8
5	9	8	6	7	1	2	4	3
3	8	4	9	5	6	7	2	1
7	5	2	3	1	8	4	9	6
1	6	9	2	4	7	3	8	5

Find today's answers + play more games at metronews.ca

SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:

Under 13 min .....Genius
13-17 min.....Scholar
17-21 min .....Smart
21-25 min .....Not bad
25+ min.....Keep practising

Metro Recipe of the Day

Halibut Steaks with Tomato and Bell Pepper Salsa

INGREDIENTS:

4 halibut steaks, about 5 ounces each
4 tbsp (60 mL) extra-virgin olive oil
Fresh juice of 1 small orange
1 garlic clove, crushed
1 orange, cut into wedges, to garnish
Tomato and Bell Pepper Salsa
2 medium plum tomatoes, seeded and diced
1/2 red bell pepper, seeded and diced
1/2 red onion, finely chopped
Fresh juice of 1 small orange
1/4 cup (50 mL) chopped fresh basil
1 tbsp (15 mL) balsamic vinegar
1 tsp (5 mL) sugar
Salt and fresh-ground pepper

METHOD:

1. Place halibut steaks in shallow glass bowl. Mix together oil, orange juice, garlic, salt and pepper to taste, and spoon over fish steaks; set aside.
2. For salsa, put tomatoes, bell pepper, red onion, orange juice, basil, vinegar, sugar, salt and pepper to taste in medium bowl and stir. Spoon into serving bowl and chill until needed.
3. Heat lightly-oiled, ridged cast-iron grill pan or skillet over high heat. Place fish steaks on grill pan or in skillet and fry, basting from time to time with oil mixture, until fish just flakes easily, 2 to 3 minutes on each side
4. Place fish steaks on warm serving plates and grind black pepper over. Garnish with orange wedges and serve with salsa.

SERVES 4

rd.ca
For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to **rd.ca** or check out **Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!**

Horoscopes

AVATAR VENUS

ARIES
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
A trustworthy person has remarkable news. A disturbance can produce a warning. You'll want to escape from a weird dilemma.

TAURUS
APRIL 21-MAY 21
Reorganize a sluggish system right away. A threat will jog somebody's memory. You can get ahead by leaving a sad place.

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
An amiable manner influences a realist. Don't count your blessings in public. You shouldn't push optimism to a cynical person.

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 22
A prosperous guy needs medical attention. Shabbiness will not be acceptable to a lady. Don't be a fool when crossing a street.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
Check your documents carefully. A magnificent man takes the other side in a conflict. Difficulties arise when you are too aggressive.

VIRGO
AUG 24-SEPT 22
Time passes slowly while awaiting a disclosure. A decent man gives a warning about unreliability. An alarmist rouses the neighbourhood.

LIBRA
SEPT 23-OCT 23
A disagreement about benefits will lead to teasing. A friend will happily agree to make changes. A separation leads to a breakthrough.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 22
Show your support when a relationship begins. An eccentric person is making a big mistake. A friend causes a hullabaloo.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23-DEC 21
Some people will be switching partners. By not worrying, you can correct a problem. Yield to the facts, no matter what happens.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22-JAN 20
A lenient person will be receptive. A disturbing tempest threatens to interfere with funds. It's wiser not to complain about hostility.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 18
Never smirk when someone is discussing their ego. Some mighty odd events will make you flinch. Don't defend your spending with a whiner.

PISCES
FEB 19-MARCH 20
An ill friend will discuss his personal agony. Your lack of concern is the point of a story. Keep your side of a bargain.

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